

**THE EMPEROR CHARLES V<sup>\*</sup>**  
**AND THE RISE OF MODERN EUROPE**

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[Photo. Anderson]

THE EMPEROR CHARLES V ON THE FIELD OF MUHLBERG  
(After Titian)

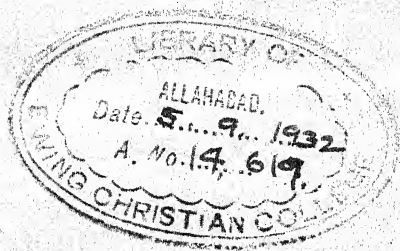
# THE EMPEROR. CHARLES V

AND THE RISE OF MODERN  
EUROPE

BY

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## LIST OF PRINCIPAL DATES

- 1500. Charles V born.
- 1506. Inherits Netherlands and Franche Comté.
- 1516. Inherits the Spanish kingdom.
- 1519. Elected Emperor.
- 1521. Confronts Luther at Worms.
- 1525. Victory of Pavia.
- 1526. Marries Isabella of Portugal.
- 1527. Sack of Rome.
- 1529. The Protest of the Lutherans.
- 1530. Coronation as Emperor at Bologna. Diet of Augsburg.
- 1532. Truce of Nuremberg.
- 1535. Campaign against Tunis. Visits Sicily and Rome.
- 1536. Invades Provence.
- 1538. Friendship with Francis I at Aigues Mortes.
- 1539. Death of the Empress Isabella.
- 1540. Insurrection of Ghent.
- 1541. Disaster at Algiers.
- 1543. Defeats Duke of Cleves.
- 1544. Peace of Crépy.
- 1547. Battle of Muhlberg—capture of John Frederick of Saxony and Philip of Hesse.
- 1548. The Interim and the Reform.
- 1552. Flight from Innsbruck. Siege of Metz.
- 1556. Abdication of Netherlands. Abdication of Spanish kingdoms, Sicily and Franche Comté. Departure for Yuste.
- 1558. Charles dies.



# THE EMPEROR CHARLES V

## AND THE RISE OF MODERN EUROPE

### PART I

1500-1521

### CHAPTER I

#### “GOOD STOMAK AND COURAGGY”

CHARLES was born at Ghent in the Netherlands on 24th February 1500. He was an important baby. Of his two grandfathers, one, Maximilian, was ruler of Austria and Roman Emperor, and the other, Ferdinand, was King of Spain. Spain in those days consisted of a number of states of which the most important were Castile and Aragon: Ferdinand was King of Aragon and several of the smaller states, and he had married Isabella, the Queen of Castile and of the rest of the smaller states; and so Ferdinand and Isabella ruled the whole peninsula, with the exception of Portugal. Charles's mother Juana, or Jane, was daughter of these two; and his father Philip was son of Maximilian. Maximilian had given Philip the Netherlands to rule.

Charles had no real home life. He saw little of his father and mother, for the year after he

was born they went to Spain, leaving him behind in the Netherlands. They returned when he was four, but only for two years. In 1506 Queen Isabella died, and Charles's mother Jane succeeded to the throne of Castile. Father and mother departed again to Spain, this time never to return: on their arrival Jane, who had lately had queer fits, was pronounced mad and unfit to rule, and she was shut up in a castle and closely guarded; and Philip died before the end of the year. So Ferdinand acted as Regent of Castile for his daughter, Crazy Jane, as she was called, until his grandson, Charles, should be of age.

On the death of his father, six-year-old Charles inherited the Netherlands, and he was besides, through his mother, heir to Spain. If Crazy Jane did not recover her wits he would succeed to Castile as soon as he was of age; and Aragon would be his when Ferdinand died.

Naturally Charles at the age of six could not rule the Netherlands himself, but he was lucky in having an aunt, Margaret, daughter of Maximilian, a wise woman who knew how to rule and how to train a future ruler. His Aunt Margaret became Regent of the Netherlands, and was father and mother to the little boy whose father was dead, and whose mother was mad.

Charles was not a strong boy. He was pale of face and he looked delicate. Like his father he

had a projecting under-jaw, and on account of this he found it difficult to chew comfortably and to speak distinctly. But he was well built; he had frank eyes and an intelligent forehead, and indeed was quite a pleasant-looking and dignified little fellow in spite of his jaw. *— 6/13/30*

It must have been dull for Charles at home, for he hardly ever saw his only brother Ferdinand, who was brought up in Spain, and of his four sisters only Eleanor the eldest remained in the Netherlands. Besides, there is not much fun in being educated as a King: hard work at many dull subjects is the daily task, and young Charles who, like many boys, was lazy, rebelled. He did not like lessons at all. Like others at the Court he spoke and wrote French. When his tutors tried to teach him foreign languages—Spanish, German, Italian, Latin—he said they were educating him as if he were to be a schoolmaster! He would not learn! Being a prince and obstinate he had his way. He was probably sorry when he grew up and as ruler of Spain could speak no Spanish, ruler of Germany could speak no German, Roman Emperor knew no Latin.

But, lazy though he was, he learned much from his head tutor, Count Henry of Nassau. Count Henry was a jolly fellow: a great drinker, too, who had a huge bed made with sheets and bolsters at head and foot for his guests to lie on when they could no longer trust their legs. But

Count Henry did not teach Charles to drink: he was a great teller of stories and he would tell Charles tales of the famous deeds of the boy's ancestors, Philip the Good and Charles the Bold. Charles, through listening to Count Henry, developed a keen love for history, and we may be sure that in hearing these tales he became anxious himself to increase the fame of his family. His favourite game was playing at battles between Christians and Turks, and this shows in what way he hoped to make himself a famous king. Charles always insisted on being a Christian and on winning; but when he grew up and fought the Turks in earnest he did not always win. Charles also frequently amused himself by teasing the lions and bears in the Royal Zoo; he would take a stick to the cages and poke at them through the bars. But he was not cruel, either as a boy, or when he grew up. Perhaps he teased them because he liked them; or maybe he was bored and could think of nothing else to do—except lessons which were worse than nothing.

But though he shirked lessons, playing truant whenever he could, he had not much time to do as he liked. For he was a prince. At the age of seven he had made his first public speech, though he only said what his Aunt Margaret told him to say. At the age of fifteen he was declared of age, and took over the Government of the Netherlands from his Aunt.

Fifteen—and called upon to rule the Netherlands! It was too much to expect of any boy. And Charles was a boy even though he was a prince, and was not at all keen to rule. Lazy and obstinate over his lessons, he was also shy. He would be only too glad to let someone else do the work of ruling. Now his grand chamberlain and governor was William, Lord of Chièvres, a strong-willed man who loved power. Chièvres from now onwards until Charles was twenty-one was constantly with his young master, by day and night. Charles would have found it difficult to oppose Chièvres's strong will even had he wished, and being a boy and lazy he probably did not wish. Consequently it was Chièvres who ruled the Netherlands; and, in fact, until Chièvres died in 1521 Charles never asserted his authority at all, either because he would not or because he could not.

At the Court of the Netherlands were many people carefully observing young Charles, because he would be such an important personage when he grew up. Ambassadors from foreign courts wrote home their opinions of him, and almost without exception they described him as a weakling who had no mind or character of his own. One even calls him an idiot. He was certainly weak of body: but these ambassadors, if they had thought a little more, might have concluded that Charles let Chièvres do what he



liked partly from laziness, and partly because a young boy's will could be no match for the will of a powerful man intent on keeping power in his own hands. The boy who loved to play at winning Christian victories over the Turks and loved to hear of the famous deeds of his ancestors may yet prove to be no weakling.

Perhaps it was as well that Charles only nominally ruled the Netherlands, for the government of this country was no easy task. It was not really a country at all, but a collection of provinces which had little in common. The inhabitants of the Southern provinces spoke French, they were mainly occupied in agriculture, and in them the nobles were powerful. The northern provinces were Dutch and Flemish, they were engaged in commerce and manufacture, and in them the nobles were weak. Each province had its own method of government, and its traditional feuds and factions. Many of them wished to be independent. Some were coveted by the Kings of France, who were always ready to stir up trouble amongst them for their own advantage. The outlying provinces were temptingly exposed to attack. As you will see on map (facing p. 56), the great bishopric of Liège almost separates Luxemburg and Limburg from the main body of the provinces: and Charles also inherited Franche Comté, which was completely cut off by Lorraine. The task of the ruler of the

Netherlands was to bind these provinces firmly together into a single nation, to make all the little provinces forget their old feuds and traditions of government, and submit themselves willingly to a strong central monarchy; and this central monarchy must protect the western frontier from the French, keep the Channel free from pirates for the fishing fleets of Holland and Zeeland and the trade entering their ports, and encourage commerce and manufactures. The ruler would also wish to round off his realm by annexation north and south, thus making it more compact and easier to defend from enemies.

Such was the first task Charles inherited—a task difficult enough to keep a strong man occupied all his life. Charles left it to Chièvres—we have seen why. To this task would be added the government of the whole of Spain when his grandfather Ferdinand died, if his mother was still insane as she seemed likely to be: and of the Austrian territories when his grandfather Maximilian died. And, as if this would not be enough to keep him busy, Maximilian was doing his best to ensure that when he died Charles should be elected Emperor: Charles would then be ruler of all Germany as well.

So Charles was a person of importance—perhaps the most important person in Europe—boy though he was. The eyes of all Europe were upon him, and though very naturally at the age

of fifteen he preferred play to the work of statecraft, his Aunt Margaret and Maximilian must have been anxious about the future. For it was a serious matter that with such a future before him he should show no aptitude or keenness for government.

But amongst all the ambassadors who are agreed in reporting Charles to be an insignificant weakling there is one exception. The English Ambassador, Sir Thomas Spinelli, writing home to Henry VIII, who was Charles's uncle, shows that there were other and perhaps keener observers. "Many do conject in him good stomak and couraggy," he writes, "and how he will be fast in his determynacions." \*

Thus Spinelli wrote in 1515. His words were soon to be put to the test. On 23rd January 1516 King Ferdinand died. Crazy Jane the heir was unfit to rule, and Charles was proclaimed King of Spain at Brussels. If he wished to retain Spain he must lose no time in going there, for trouble was brewing amongst his proud Spanish subjects. Arrangements were immediately set in train for the voyage.

Thus at the age of sixteen, like a boy leaving school, Charles made ready to leave the Netherlands for a larger world where his character was to be tried and put to the test. We have seen a boy, shy, lazy, obstinate, apparently under the thumb of his governor, Chièvres, his ambitions—





CHARLES AS A YOUNG MAN



if he has any—cherished in secret; but still Charles has not yet had much chance of showing what he is made of: Spinelli may be right; the boy who plays at sham-fights with Turks shows signs of "good stomak and couraggy": the boy who is "fast in his determynacions" not to work may yet grow into a determined man.

## CHAPTER II

### THE SCENE OF HIS WORK

**D**URING the years when Charles lived modern Europe began slowly to take shape, to become recognizable. Certain changes were happening which began to make Europe like the Europe of to-day.

For some hundreds of years before the beginning of the fourteenth century (1300) Europe had been divided into two great Empires; the Eastern Empire stretched from the Adriatic to the Caspian Sea, and its capital was Constantinople; the Western Empire included almost all Europe west of the Elbe and the Adriatic, and its capital was Rome. We shall not be concerned here with the Eastern Empire; the lands that had formed the Western Empire of Christendom were the scene of Charles's work.

Until the fourteenth century in Western Christendom there were no great nations like the France, the Germany, the Britain of to-day: there were kings indeed, but the supreme rulers of the Empire were the Pope and the Emperor. The Pope was the head of the Church and, as a clergyman looks after his parish, he looked after all western Europe, for all western Europe was his parish. And the Emperor was the constable whose authority extended over all the Empire,

whose duty it was to keep order and punish evildoers. The Canon Laws or the Laws of the Church were obeyed throughout the Empire: throughout the Empire feudal customs settled the rights, the privileges, the duties—the whole manner of life, in fact—of kings, lords, knights, squires, peasants, serfs. Throughout the Empire Latin was the only written language: the Vulgate, the official Latin Bible, was the only Bible known to Western Christendom. Nation could not war against nation, for there were no nations; there was fighting indeed, and in plenty—the crusading armies of Christendom fought the infidel Turks; the Emperor fought the Pope, and the Pope the Emperor, for there was constant strife between them as to who was the greater; and ambitious kings and feudal lords with their retainers fought for territorial conquest. Robert Bruce marks the end of this age: he taught the Scots that they were “a people,” a nation, and he led them in a War of Independence against the feudal monarchy of England (1306-1342); the Scots were the first of Europeans to fight for their country.

Such was Europe until two hundred years before the birth of Charles. These centuries of the Christian Empire are sometimes called the Middle Ages—coming as they do before the Modern Age and after the Classical Age. For Rome had been the capital of another empire

before it became the capital of Western Christendom, indeed, before the birth of Christ at Bethlehem made the Christian religion possible. Julius Caesar and his successors had established a Roman Empire that stretched from the Danube to Egypt and North Africa, from Palestine to Spain and Britain. These ancient Romans had built palaces and temples, carved statues, written poems, plays, and histories that are admired and studied to this day. And before the great days of these Romans the Greeks had flourished, whose capital was at Athens: and in art, in literature, in painting, and in sculpture the Greeks achieved more beautiful things even than the Romans. But, strange to say, during the Middle Ages that succeeded the fall of the old Roman Empire the achievements of the ancient Greeks and Romans were forgotten. Their writings were neglected. Though the Christian Romans dwelt amongst the mighty ruins of the old Rome, their eyes were blind and their minds were dead to the greatness of their city's past.

A thousand years passed. At last, about a hundred years before the birth of Charles, a few people became interested in these ruins. The few became more, became many. Interest in the ruins led to a desire to know more of the old Romans themselves; and many Latin works which for centuries had been despised as useless became objects of eager search and study. Soon



all educated Italy was interested and began to realize the greatness of her ancestors. Up and down Italy schools were started where men studied the old Roman orators, historians, and poets. Meanwhile the Eastern Empire was being overrun by the Turks. Greek scholars fled to Italy; and speedily the treasures of the ancient Greek literature were revealed to the Italians. Enthusiasm increased. Study of the classics was Italy's pleasure and occupation. And not only Italy's, for men journeyed from every quarter of Europe to study at the feet of the Italian scholars.

This enthusiastic study of the newly discovered classical writings is sometimes called "The Revival of Learning." But the enthusiasts were not content with merely studying classical literature and learning all that could be learnt about the ancients. There were some who began to imitate them, to adopt their ideas. And that was a very important change indeed. For these ancient Greeks and Romans were not Christian: they flourished before the beginning of Christianity. Thus in Rome, the capital of Christendom, and indeed in other Italian cities, and in more distant parts of the Christian Empire there were rich and educated people whose enthusiasm led them to adopt ideas and beliefs that were not Christian: pagan they are sometimes called. After a thousand years and more of

burial the classical spirit had sprung into life again.

Let us see exactly the extent and importance of this change.

Throughout the Middle Ages the Church had been a great civilizing influence: it had brought comfort and consolation to the distressed; it had given courage and hope to the ignorant and the fearful. Humility, faith, love were the lessons that it taught. It shone like a bright torch in a dark world, assuring men that however their bodies suffered their souls were immortal: by doing as Christ through the Church bade them they would go to heaven. And the Church bade them overcome the natural weakness and temptations of the body by prayer and fasting, by penance and good works; while any thought suggesting doubt of the Church or disobedience to its instructions was the voice of Satan. Savage and brutal would Europe have been and full of terror and sufferings without the Church that for so many hundred years had kept alight its kindly influence in the forests of Germany as on the shores of Italy, in Alpine valleys, and in English cornlands.

But the classics taught not humility, faith, love. Look at a picture of a statue of a Greek god. See how strong and beautiful he is, and full of energy. The Greek ideal was to become like such a god, and anything was right that



would help to make a man beautiful like this. The body was as important to the Greek as the soul to the Christian, and bodily pleasures were not temptations of the devil. Independent thought, too, far from being the voice of Satan, was one of man's most noble gifts. Man, indeed, was a noble and beautiful being in body and mind, and his body and mind must be developed, their beauty and nobility developed, by active and joyous life.

It is easy to understand how strong was the appeal of these classical ideas: for, according to them, men could live a life of enjoyment with a clear conscience. And many Roman citizens and citizens of other towns of Italy embraced the new ideas with the eagerness of a stableful of ponies let out into a sunny meadow. Rome, the capital of the Christian Empire, was full of excitement and enthusiasm for the new ideas, and some of the Popes even behaved as if they were no longer believers in the Christian religion: but they remained Popes as a tree remains standing long after it is dead—until it is cut down or torn up by a storm. And there were storms brewing that were to shake the Papacy to its very roots.

Christianity had taught men that they should live sober, decent lives; the new idea worked an unhappy change. In every age and country there are men whose lack of self-control does untold harm, harm that spreads far beyond the narrow

limits of their own immediate circle. And so it was in Italy. There were some men in Italy who regarded the Christian ideal as a dreary prison, and, having escaped, they indulged in a veritable orgy of extravagance and self-indulgence. In every city of Italy, but especially in Rome, luxury flaunted itself, and drunken feasts enlivened every night. The wealthy vied with each other in the splendour and extravagance of their entertainments. And the Pope set the pace. It is said that on the table of Leo X, who was Pope from 1513 to 1521, were to be found rare cooked fishes from Byzantium and ragouts of parrots' tongues, and the guests were served on golden platters which they threw from the open windows into the Tiber. But whence did the Pope get the money for these extravagant entertainments? Money flowed as freely into the Papal coffers as out of them, for the appointments to most of the high posts in the Church throughout Europe were in the Pope's hands; and he did not scruple to sell these posts at a high price: bishoprics and cardinalates were put up to auction, the highest bidder won, and the money passed to the Pope.

Thus it was that the streets and squares of Rome, the Eternal City, the capital of Christendom, were filled with masques and balls, comedies and carnival processions in imitation of the ancients. It was a sorry day for the Church when

so many of its leaders and the Pope himself succumbed to the extravagance and self-indulgence that the new ideas brought in their train, misappropriating Church monies and by their actions glaringly disobeying the teaching of Christ. And while we must remember that the Church as a whole was unaffected by the contagion of the new ideas, it cannot be denied that the behaviour of Rome and other cities of Italy had fatal consequences.

For to Rome came pilgrims, devout Christians, from other parts of Europe, pilgrims who had been taught to venerate the Pope, the Holy Father, and to regard Rome as the Sacred City. Imagine with what wide, astonished, unhappy eyes they would behold what was going on. From the north, especially, from Germany, came these pilgrims: and they went back and told their countrymen what they had seen. They knew now why their Bishops were always absent in Rome. Germany grew angry and disgusted. Moreover, there were scholars in Germany as well as in Italy: scholars who had learned Greek in the schools of Italy. They returned to Germany enthusiastic for the new learning: but their learning and their enthusiasm were applied to Christian ends.

In those days there were no translations of the Bible generally available: the Vulgate, the official Latin version of the Church, was the

Bible that was in use throughout western Europe. The German scholars, using their new knowledge of Greek and Latin, studied the New Testament in its original language, and discovered many errors in the Vulgate. They discovered, too, that much of what the Church had taught them to believe and do was not mentioned in the Bible. But the Bible, they argued, was the word of God, and therefore must be right; and whatsoever the Church taught which was not supported by the Bible was wrong. Thus Germany began to demand reform of the Church—reform in the behaviour of the high dignitaries of the Church, and reform in the services and doctrines of the Church to bring them into accord with the Bible. This was the beginning of what is called the Reformation. And in 1516, while Charles was sailing from the Netherlands to Spain, Martin Luther, the champion of the Reformation, was busy preaching and stirring up the German people to demand first better discipline and then reform in the Church: and the Pope, the Holy Father, Leo X, bent simply on enjoying the Papacy, was the centre of a gay, feasting throng in the Eternal City.

We have already hinted that Charles will become Emperor; as Emperor he will be Champion of the Church, and it will be his duty to guard the Church and preserve its ancient doctrines: he will thus have to face those who in Ger-



many wished to alter it and those who in Rome and Italy were staining its good name and undermining its great authority. The German demand for Reformation, the frank paganism of Italy, like two rivers whose source was the Revival of Learning, were already beginning to sap the foundations of the great structure of the Church; Charles has a hard task before him—to preserve the Church and strengthen it so that it may resist heresy and corruption.

The Revival of Learning, then, with its differing results in Germany and Italy, was working a great change in Europe. There is another great change that we must notice if we wish to understand Charles's career. We have said that western Europe through the Middle Ages had been as one country ruled by the Pope and the Emperor; to understand the second change, think of Europe as a nursery full of children in charge of a governess and a servant with a stick. The children's names are England, France, Spain, Germany, Italy; the governess is the Church; the servant with the stick is the Emperor. The governess's duty is to teach the children to be good: that was what the Church did. The servant with the stick is there to whip them if they are naughty: that was what the Emperor did. For a long time, while they were little, the children were fairly obedient. But all children grow up, and as young England,

France, Spain, Germany, and Italy grew older the governess found it difficult to keep them in hand. They defied governess and servant. England first, and then France and Spain found they were big and strong enough to do pretty much what they liked; and this was the easier since the governess, the Church, as we have seen, was growing lazy and ill, and the servant was now no stronger than themselves. These three children of the European nursery had begun to 'find their feet' just before Charles was born. In other words, strong nations were beginning to form themselves under powerful kings.

England, France, and Spain led the way. The formation of these three great nations began just before Charles was born, and each established its strength in the same way; in each country a powerful king rose and crushed the great nobles whose selfish quarrels were wasting the blood and strength of the people. In England Henry VII, the first King of the House of Tudor, crushed the proud ambitious nobles who for thirty years had wasted the land in civil wars (the Wars of the Roses). Henry VII gave England peace, and with peace she grew strong; she became a nation with a national army and navy, instead of an island torn by the strife of a feudal nobility. In much the same way after Joan of Arc (1412-1451) had inspired the French people with a consciousness of nationality and led them, as Robert

Bruce had led the Scots, to fight for their country, the powerful kings of the House of Valois crushed the French nobles and made France a strong nation. Ferdinand and Isabella, Charles's grandparents, had by their marriage united the kingdoms of Spain, and they, too, put down the nobles; they had also to crush the Moorish infidels who had crossed to Spain from Africa, and they raised the greatest and best national army in Europe. In each of these three great nations the defeat of the nobles greatly increased the power and splendour of the King; there he was, alone in his glory at the head of the nation, and the people far below, and no longer were there any powerful nobles in between. But the Kings in their splendid isolation were yet wise enough to know that their strength came from the people who alone could prevent the nobles climbing back to power; for what strength had the King save the strong right arms of his people? So the Kings favoured the people, especially fostering the middle-class people of the towns that were growing up in these years of peace.

Thus the formation of powerful nations was the other change that had already begun to transform Europe when Charles set sail from the Netherlands. Charles in Spain will have to take up the work begun by Ferdinand and Isabella; will he increase the power of the Spanish nation? And will he during his life make the Netherlands

also a great nation, like France and England, by uniting all the states under a strong monarchy?

And what of Germany and Italy, the other two children of the European nursery? Germany consisted of a hundred or more states, great and small, each with its own ruler and government, but all acknowledging the overlordship of the Emperor. It will be Charles's aim, as Emperor, to assert Imperial authority and weld Germany into a strong united nation. Italy also was divided into a number of small states, ruled some by Spain and friends of Spain, some by friends and relations of the King of France, some by the Pope and by his relations, some acknowledging Imperial overlordship: and these states were constantly being urged into war by the Pope in the hope that in the ensuing disturbance more territory might be grabbed for the Papacy. Charles, as Emperor and as King of Spain, has more interest and influence in Italy than any other ruler: he will be anxious to stop the constant fighting amongst the states, lest he should lose his own lands in Italy; in asserting his authority to give Italy peace, will he also be able to shape her into a single united nation?

This nation-building in the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, and Italy, forms the *political* task that awaits Charles, a task more than sufficient for four able men. In addition he has the *religious* task of purifying the Church and Papacy,



and turning back the flood of the Reformation.

Surely it is impossible for one to accomplish so much? And he, so far as we yet know him, is a boy setting out for the world having shown no sign of possessing great qualities, much less genius. Poor fellow, we cannot help thinking, he little knows the magnitude and difficulty of the work that he is leaving the Netherlands to grapple with.

### CHAPTER III

## SPAIN. A BAD BEGINNING

1517-1520

MUCH had to be done before Charles left for Spain. Causes of delay seemed endless. To safeguard the Netherlands during his absence a treaty must be made with France: negotiations lasted six months before the Treaty of Noyon was signed. It would be dangerous to sail unless England were friendly: a promise was obtained from England that her fleets would not interfere. Money had to be raised for the cost of the voyage, and ships fitted out for him and his eight hundred attendants. But at last all arrangements were made, and the royal fleet lay ready at Flushing. Then for weeks westerly winds kept the fleet in port.

Suddenly the wind changed to E.N.E. They were away at last—on 8th September 1517—the light, fast ships scouting ahead to clear the channel of pirates. Charles took his sister Eleanor with him, and gay and beautiful was the ship on which they were berthed: on her fore-sail was painted the Crucifixion and his own device—the pillars of Hercules with the motto *Plus Oultre* (Yet Further) between them—on the mainsail was the Holy Trinity, Saint Nicholas

on the mizzen, and Saint Christopher on the spritsail. Charles was richly clad in a crimson satin tunic with a high collar scarlet-lined, and high leggings were drawn over his scarlet stockings. On his head he wore a scarlet cap fastened beneath the chin, and over his tunic a sleeveless cape reaching to the waist and fastened by a jewelled brooch.

The voyage was stormy, but Charles was only once seasick. Afterwards he was all the better. He ate heartily, and, as the ship rolled and tossed, laughed to see the servants staggering about with dishes that reached the floor as often as the table. Early on the voyage the ship that bore the royal horses was burned out, and thence onward the regulations as to lights were strict; but Charles and Eleanor were allowed a lantern lest they should slip and hurt themselves in the dark.

It was a happy, lazy time for Charles. He played cards and chess, listened to the prattle of his fool, or jester, Jan Bobin, read, ate, or from the deck idly watched his ships that followed astern; and each day began and ended with prayers.

The holiday did not end with the voyage. The fleet was making for Biscay. Land was at length sighted, but instead of Biscay it was the coast of Asturias. Charles, quite ready for adventure, decided to land with his close personal attendants. At dead of night they were rowed up

the estuary to the little village of Villa Viciosa, the rest of the fleet putting back to Santander. They picnicked on the first night, and the great lords and ladies fried eggs and bacon for supper, some of them successfully, some of them with results that were far from dainty.

The inhabitants of Villa Viciosa and the neighbourhood on sighting the ships had fled into the hills thinking they were French or Turkish come to plunder. But when they made out the Castilian flag they flocked back to welcome the party, and offered gifts of sheep and oxen and skins of wine for the morning's breakfast. Such was Charles's first acquaintance with his Spanish subjects—poor peasants all, bare-legged and barefooted, the men swarthy and bearded.

Charles and his company pushed inland. Through the wild and hilly country they wandered, passing from village to village, and everywhere entertained with dances and bullfights by the peasants. The land was remarkably fertile, but thinly cultivated, because the peasants, considering themselves gentlemen whom work would demean, cultivated only sufficiently just to keep them alive.

After six weeks of picnicking—how he must have enjoyed it after the dreary monotony of life at the Netherlands Court!—Charles and Eleanor made their way to Tordesillas to visit their



mother. Crazy Jane was in a sane mood when they arrived, but she could not believe they were her children, whom she still thought of as infants. Charles's sister Catharine looked after their mother: it was a dull life for her shut up with the half-mad woman, and Charles was very kind to her. But one thing Charles would not allow her—the pleasure of painting her face, a practice that was common amongst the ladies of Spain. Charles issued an order that she should have her face washed in fresh river water daily.

Charles's visit to his mother marked the end of his holiday. On 18th November he made his state entry into Valladolid, the capital of Castile. His life of work had begun.

Charles had inherited the Spanish kingdoms. Spain in those days consisted of almost as many kingdoms as the Netherlands of provinces (see map facing p. 100). Beyond the peninsula the kingdoms of Majorca, Sardinia, Sicily, and Naples belonged to the Spanish Crown, and farther afield were vast colonies on the islands and mainland of Central and South America. The peninsula itself was not one state, but many: most important were the kingdoms of Castile and Aragon that Ferdinand and Isabella had united by their marriage. Connected with Castile was the kingdom of Granada, and with Aragon the kingdom of Valencia, and the county of Barcelona; and there were other

smaller counties along the Pyrenees. Each of these kingdoms and counties had its own traditional method of government, and many of them like Castile and Aragon had been bitter rivals for centuries. Such was Charles's Spanish inheritance; his problem was to weld these lands into a single powerful state. This task Ferdinand and Isabella had already begun, as we have seen, by subduing the nobles and favouring the towns, who were represented in the Parliaments or Cortes of the various kingdoms. But Ferdinand and Isabella had subdued the nobles, not crushed them; they had shown favour to the towns, and the towns were restive and behaving like spoiled children. During the two years since Ferdinand's death both towns and nobles had been getting out of hand, and both were threatening revolt on Charles's arrival.

Charles's first duty was to visit each of his kingdoms that he might be recognized as King. Castile was much the most important of the kingdoms; the history of Spain during Charles's reign is practically the history of Castile, so let us see how he fares there, and pass quickly over his experiences in the other kingdoms where the problems that confronted him were very similar.

The discontent speedily showed itself in Castile after Charles's entry into Valladolid. Towns and nobles, hitherto enemies, seemed united in disapproval of the Crown. The trouble

arose largely from the presence of Charles's Flemish attendants. Chièvres was always at Charles's side; always his Flemish friends and ministers were about him. Now the Castilians were proud: they looked down upon all foreigners as dirt; naturally, therefore, they hated to see their King surrounded with foreign ministers, as Englishmen would hate to have a Prime Minister and Cabinet of Frenchmen or Germans. The nobles complained that Charles would not give them audience: his inability to speak Spanish was Charles's reason, but they thought it was his determination to be advised only by the hated Flemings. Charles was himself a foreigner, and many desired Ferdinand, his younger brother, for their King. The Castilians loved Ferdinand, a happy, courageous young fellow, who, brought up in Castile, quite outshone his silent, foreign elder brother.

On 2nd February 1518 the Cortes of Castile opened. In their address to Charles the deputies required him to swear that he would observe the customs of the kingdom and choose only natives for his ministers and officials; they had not a good word for the Flemish ministers, but said many harsh things about them without hesitation; and they begged him to learn Spanish. Charles took the oath as King, but made no definite promises, and when they began to grumble he told them he had sworn the oath once and



they would have to be content. After a long discussion the Cortes swore allegiance and voted him a generous sum of money annually for three years to carry on the work of government.

Like a cock crowing at the dawn of his rule, the Cortes had voiced clearly the general hatred of the Spaniards for foreigners. And indeed there was excuse for this hatred. Charles behaved as if he meant to keep his Flemish ministers by him. An ambassador writes at this time from the Castilian Court: "He says little, is not of much ability, and is entirely ruled by his Flemish governors."

From Castile Charles passed on to Saragossa, the capital of Aragon, that he might there be recognized as King, and receive his Aragonese subsidy. The Aragonese were even more stubborn in their discontent than the Castilians. They refused to declare him King unless he in turn declared his brother Ferdinand, whom they favoured, to be his heir. That the Aragonese should dare thus to argue with the King of Castile roused the wrath of the proud Castilian nobles: he who is good enough for Castile is more than good enough for Aragon, they said. One of them took up the cudgels on Charles's behalf. There was a bloody street fight. It cleared the air, however, like a thunderstorm, and Charles was recognized. On the advice of his Flemish ministers he proposed some improvements in the

government of the country, which was about as badly ruled as a country could be. He might as well have offered a feather bed to a pig; a pig is quite happy in his sty, and the Aragonese preferred their own time-honoured laws, even if they were bad, to anything suggested by the King. After the vote of a subsidy barely large enough to cover the cost of his visit, Charles proceeded to Barcelona where the Cortes of Catalonia were summoned. If the Castilians were discontented, and the Aragonese stubborn, the Catalonians were openly impudent. Probably only bribery persuaded them to acknowledge Charles as King and grant him his subsidy.

Valencia was Charles's next destination, but on the eve of his departure came news that he was elected Emperor by the Electors of Germany. His immediate presence in Germany was necessary—as Emperor and as ruler of the Austrian territories to which he succeeded on Maximilian's death (1519). Instead of meeting the Cortes of Valencia he hastened across Spain to Corunna to embark for Germany *via* the Netherlands.

Charles stopped at Valladolid on his way to Corunna. The business of recognition in Aragon and Catalonia had occupied more than a year and a half, and the Castilian capital was furious that of his two years in Spain he had only spent five months in Castile, his most important kingdom. Furthermore, he was now leaving,

Castile's King was leaving, to take up his duties as Emperor, as if Castile were an insignificant province to be ruled from afar. And they had the further grievance, that Charles had demanded another subsidy: realizing that his absence in Germany would prevent him meeting the Cortes when the present three-year subsidy expired, he had asked that a further subsidy should be voted before he left and paid in the years when it was due; but the Castilians in their anger chose to consider his demand as an unjust claim that ill rewarded their previous generosity. And lastly, and worst of all perhaps, Charles had summoned the Cortes to meet him at Santiago in Galicia near his port of departure: Valladolid was deeply insulted that such a wretched little town, outside Castile, should be chosen for the honour.

Valladolid meant business. The great town bell rang summoning the people to arms, and Charles only escaped under cover of a thunder-storm.

At Santiago Charles met the Cortes. The Bishop of Badajos read the long royal address. When it was finished Charles rose and said: "I am grieved at my departure, but I cannot act otherwise with due regard to my honour and the welfare of my kingdoms. I promise you on my royal word of honour to return and take possession of these kingdoms at the close of three years from the day of my departure, or earlier, if earlier

be possible. . . . For your contentment I am content, on my royal word of honour, not to bestow office in these kingdoms on such as are not natives thereof, and this I swear and promise."

Then the Cortes voted on the grant of the subsidy. Three times they voted, and three times the vote went against the grant. Irritated, impatient, and pressed for time, Charles moved on to Corunna, bidding the Cortes follow him thither. On his arrival he issued an edict against the granting of posts to foreigners, and this move would appear to have been successful, for at last the Cortes voted the subsidy.

But, though he had obtained the subsidy, Charles had not cured the bitter discontent of his people. And his final act before embarking was inexcusable. He appointed Bishop Adrian of Utrecht, a foreigner who had been one of his tutors, to be Regent in his absence—and this, after the promise "on my royal word of honour"! The act is one of many that shows he never forgot his friends; but that is no excuse for breaking one's word.

Badly, indeed, had his reign begun. Far from having shown himself a nation-builder, he had stirred up discontent everywhere. Towns and nobles alike were angry, and the only question was which would revolt first.

His departure was one of the chief grievances.



Spain needed, and knew that she needed, a strong ruler on the spot; but we cannot blame Charles for leaving: duty and necessity demanded his presence in Germany. The other chief grievance was his dependence on his Flemish ministers. All the royal acts during these two years had not been his acts, but the acts of Chièvres and other Flemish advisers. That was very natural. Remember—on his arrival he was only a boy of eighteen; he was in a land foreign to him; he could not speak its language; amongst all the strange faces and customs, the problems and difficulties, was it not natural that he should turn for help and advice to the familiar friends amongst whom he had been brought up, and chiefly, of course, to Chièvres, who for years had steered him through all difficulties? Few boys would have done otherwise. He had not yet developed into a man, not yet developed a mind and will of his own.

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## CHAPTER IV

### GERMANY. THE BOY BECOMES A MAN

1520-1521

CHARLES took no personal action in his candidature for the Empire; but his friends and relations had been active on his behalf. The Emperor was elected by the Electors, eight of the great princes, of Germany; these princes knew how to make hay when the sun of an Imperial election shone, and Charles owed his election to the money which he borrowed from his German bankers whose money-chests were deeper and better filled than those of Francis I of France, his chief rival. Rich indeed was the harvest of bribes reaped by the Electors before Charles at the age of twenty became Emperor elect, and Champion of the Church.

His haste to leave Spain was prompted by fear of France, as well as by the necessities of Germany. Friendship with France was the traditional foreign policy of the Netherlands, but France was the traditional enemy of Spain. Francis I was alarmed at the power of Spain's boy-king. Ruler of the Netherlands, and Franche Comté, Spain, Austria, Naples, Charles had on his election as Emperor added to these vast territories the overlordship of all Germany



and a large part of Italy: his dominions hemmed in France on the east and on the south; it seemed as though he were aiming at world power. Francis decided to attack Charles at once. But to ensure success he wanted the help of England. Accordingly he arranged a meeting with Henry VIII to discuss an alliance. Charles, informed of this, determined to visit Henry VIII, who was married to his mother's sister Catharine, and put a spoke in Francis's wheel if he could. The alliance of England would turn the scale in favour of Charles or Francis, whichever was successful in obtaining it. England's policy now and for some years to come was to aid whichever of the rivals appeared the weaker, that neither might become too strong.

So Charles left Corunna bound for England and Germany. He landed at Dover. Wolsey met him and read a long Latin speech of welcome, which Charles could not understand. On the next day Charles rode with his uncle Henry to Canterbury, where his aunt, Catharine of Aragon, welcomed him. The English people were amazed at the meek and pleasant manner of "so high a prince." Charles did not stay long in England. He crossed the Channel from Sandwich on the day on which his uncle crossed to meet Francis. The meeting-place of Francis and Henry earned the name of the Field of the Cloth of Gold. For weeks a thousand men had been at work upon

a palace of framework for Henry's reception: there was a sumptuous chapel and richly furnished state rooms, and the ceilings were covered with silk, the walls with cloth of Arras. And for himself Francis had had prepared another palace no less luxurious, and adjoining it a great pavilion or tent of cloth of gold. And between the royal palaces a great tournament was held lasting for many days, and the two Kings entered the lists with the noblemen and knights, and, their opponents being wise, every day the Kings won victory and applause, nor suffered a single defeat.

Thus magnificently did Francis entertain Henry, and seek to win his favour. But Henry, pretending perfect friendship with Francis, yet made no promises; and immediately after the meeting he journeyed to Gravelines to rejoin Charles, who escorted him back to Calais. Their quiet ride together through the country lanes and his nephew's sober talk made more impression on Henry VIII than the extravagant display of Francis. Charles could hasten on to Germany assured of his uncle's neutrality in the coming war, if not of his active support.

Charles was crowned Emperor at Aix-la-Chapelle on 20th October 1520. Here before the altar he swore to uphold the Catholic faith and defend the Church and its ministers from heretics and infidels. The Archbishop of Cologne turned to the dense crowds and asked them

whether they would uphold the government of their Emperor. A mighty roar of assent was their answer. Thereupon Charles was anointed with oil, girt with the sword of the Emperor, crowned with the golden crown. With ring on finger, and ball and sceptre in hand, he was led up to the ancient stone seat of Empire. Behold him, at the age of twenty, Roman Emperor.

Germany in 1520 bore little resemblance to the Germany of to-day. It was not a nation, but a parcel of a hundred or more states, great and small, princedoms, duchies, electorates, counties, bishoprics, cities (see map at end of chapter). Each of these states was virtually independent, having its own methods of government, its own system of taxation, its own army, its own foreign policy—but all of them acknowledged the Emperor as overlord, and sent representatives to the Diet or Parliament of the Empire, whose power however was a mere shadow.

Charles's political task in Germany was to assert and increase Imperial authority so as to bind these great and little states together into a united nation like France or England. But the states chafed at the Emperor's authority; they quarrelled like sparrows amongst themselves, but when they felt the shadow of Imperial authority they forgot their quarrels in a common fear, and often would unite against the Emperor as a flock of sparrows will join to mob an owl. Some of the

more powerful princes of Germany had their own ideas of accomplishing German unity, but their ideas were different from the Emperor's, for each of them wished to make Germany one by absorbing all the other states by conquest, alliance, or marriage. We shall find many of the German states allying themselves with France and even with England against Charles and their fellow states, sometimes to defend their independence, sometimes to grab more German territory. And you may be sure Francis was always glad to stir up trouble for Charles in Germany. Charles was faced with a problem that had baffled the Emperors for centuries.

But this was only one part of his task in Germany, and perhaps the easier part! It was also Charles's duty as Champion of the Church to wage war against the infidel Turks and against heretics. We have seen that the Revival of Learning produced in Germany a demand for reform of the Church. The Reformation movement led by Martin Luther had now gathered tremendous force: peasants, burghers, knights were raising their voices in angry clamour against the Church. They said that belief in the Bible and obedience to the instructions contained in the Bible were all that was necessary to a Christian: penances, pardons, and other such practices of the Church which were not mentioned in the Bible were wrong, being ordered, as they



said, only for the profit of Pope and bishops. And there was some reason in these arguments, for the sale of pardons for sins, for instance, and gifts of money as tokens of penitence, brought wealth to the Pope and cardinals which too often, as we have seen, was spent in Rome not on the Church but on feasts and extravagance.

When Charles was crowned at Aix a great part of Germany was clamouring for reform of Church doctrine and reform in the conduct of the Pope, and of the great cardinals and bishops of the Church—in fact, was steering rapidly towards “heresy.” And the Pope and the great men of the Church, who feared that this alarming spread of heresy, if unchecked, would rob them of their wealth and enjoyment, demanded the instant condemnation and destruction of Luther and his followers.

The day after his coronation Charles summoned the estates of Germany to assemble at Worms, where he would meet them. What was he to do? As Emperor he had sworn to put down heresy; and Leo was urging him to condemn Luther unheard and then exterminate the “false doctrine.” On the other hand the reformers of Germany had rejoiced at his election as Emperor, for they hoped that he might aid them, a united Germany, against the corrupt Papacy, and establish a new reformed religion. Charles’s position was very difficult: believing earnestly

and sincerely in all the doctrines of the ancient Church he had little sympathy with Luther and his followers; yet he was not blind to the corruption of Rome and the Papacy, which he now and often later declared to be his worst enemy. Furthermore Charles was just-minded enough to shrink from condemning Luther—as Leo desired—without offering him a chance to defend himself. Finally, Charles was on the spot, whereas Leo was far away, and Charles realized that the condemnation of Luther unheard and the immediate extermination of the false doctrine meant civil war in Germany—for which he had neither the inclination (with Francis baying at his heels) nor the power.

Charles decided to summon Luther to Worms and hear what he had to say in self-defence. Though he was probably influenced by his Flemish advisers, the opinion of Aleander, the Pope's nuncio, who was naturally against the decision, testifies to the young ruler's development. "This prince," Aleander says, "seemed to me well endowed with sense, and with prudence far beyond his years; to have much more at the back of his head than he carries on his face." Chièvres had died a few months before: the removal of that powerful will appears already to have encouraged Charles's hidden qualities to show themselves.

Luther made a triumphal procession from



Wittenberg, his university town, to Worms. On 16th April 1521 he and Charles met face to face, he the most powerful man in Germany, adored and honoured by thousands, Charles a young man of twenty-one, Emperor it is true, but champion of an unpopular cause. Luther was smiling nervously as he entered the hall of the Bishop's palace in which Charles and the estates were sitting. In front of Charles he moved his head up and down and from side to side, as if he knew not where to look. On being asked whether he would withdraw his doctrines, he begged for time to think the matter over. Then he left the hall; and Charles is reported to have said, "This man will never make me a Lutheran."

The next morning Luther again appeared before Charles. And what a change was there in his behaviour! Gone was his nervousness. Boldly, angrily he spoke out, refusing to withdraw a word of what he had said or written. So fierce was his attack on the Church and Pope, that Charles after intervening once or twice, finally bade him cease. Luther threw up his head, and flung out an arm towards Charles. Then he left the hall, crying "I'm through! I'm through!"

Charles and Luther never met again. Luther had flung down his challenge to the Church and its champion. Henceforward there was little chance of agreement.



MARTIN LUTHER

*(After Cranach)*



The next morning the princes of the estates came to Charles. Though none of them was a declared Lutheran, many had strong Lutheran sympathies, and if Charles had condemned Luther unheard, would have joined the Lutherans and fought Church and Emperor. Charles's prudence and fairness had checked them in the path to heresy, and, being still publicly Catholics, they could not well support Luther's fierce onslaught on the Church. Charles asked them their intentions. Like Luther they requested time for thought.

"Very well," replied Charles. "But I should like first to give you my opinion." He produced a paper covered with his own handwriting, and read them what he had written.

Here are a few sentences: "My predecessors, the most Christian Emperors of German race, have left behind the holy Catholic rites that I should live and die therein, and so until now, with God's aid I have lived. . . . A single monk, led astray by private judgment, has set himself against the faith held by all Christians for a thousand years and more, and impudently concludes that all Christians up till now have erred. I have therefore decided to stake upon this cause all my dominions, my friends, my body and my blood, my life and soul. . . . After Luther's stiff-necked reply in my presence yesterday, I have resolved never again to hear him.

Under protection he shall be escorted home, but forbidden to preach. I warn you to give witness to your opinion as good Christians and in accordance with your vows."

These are the words not of a boy, but of a man. Luther had struck at what was nearest and dearest to Charles—the Church. The blow made a man of him. He knew now what he must do. He has a mind of his own at last, and he speaks out, daring all Germany for the sake of the Church he loves.

Pale as death the princes left him. Charles would have nothing to do with their subsequent attempts to persuade Luther to withdraw. On 25th April he ordered Luther to leave Worms; and Luther left the next morning.

A month later the famous Edict of Worms, forbidding the preaching of the new doctrines, was passed by the Diet. Thus Charles's reasonableness in giving Luther a hearing led to the proclamation of an edict not in his name only, but in the name of the representatives of all Germany gathered in council. In this first round the honours were with him.

Charles had now to hasten from Germany, for war with France was imminent. He had entered Germany a boy, he left it a man and conscious of success. But the success was the fruit of his personal presence and action. The ruler of Spain and the Netherlands could not always be in

Germany. Nine years indeed were to pass before he next set foot on German soil, so busy was he with his other dominions and his war with France. How would so long an absence affect his initial success in Germany?

In the Netherlands he had left a difficult task, in order to tackle a still more difficult task in Spain. From his Spanish problems he had been compelled to turn aside in order to grapple with the even more urgent and complicated work in Germany. In the nature of things he cannot be in all his dominions at the same time, and therein lies the impossibility of what he is setting out to do. As soon as his back is turned there is likely to be trouble.

His Spanish subjects, for instance, had quickly seized their opportunity. While Charles had been grappling with the religious problem in Germany, Spain had revolted. Spain was seething when he left Corunna: before he had reached England, north, south, east, and west, the cities had boiled over into open revolt. They met with no opposition. The nobles looked on and waited: maybe they even helped in secret, for though they were old enemies of the towns they had little sympathy with Charles. Adrian, the Regent, was helpless: an honest godfearing bishop and scholar he was as unfitted to cope with the situation as a sheep amongst a pack of wolves. By the end of August 1520 the revolted



cities had set up a new government of their own, which declared itself the supreme authority in Spain, and deposed Adrian and his council.

Unhappy Adrian wrote gloomy letters to Charles in Germany: he told Charles that he was the cause of all the trouble, that the revolt was against him and his Flemish ministers. He implored Charles to come at once to Spain. Charles, with his hands full in Germany, could not come to Spain: nor could he send aid. He did not even reply to Adrian's letters.

So week after week passed. At last the rebels captured the chief loyalist city, Tordesillas. This news roused Charles to action; and his action was wise and practical. He appointed the two greatest nobles of Spain, called the Admiral and the Constable, to be Regents with Adrian, and wrote to them and the other great nobles begging them not to desert their young absent King. Charles's appeal determined the attitude of the nobles: at first they had had some sympathy with the revolting cities, but nobles and cities were old enemies at bottom, and Charles's letter was just what was needed to spur them from watchful hesitation into active hostility to the rebellion.

The nobles needed time to muster their strength, but from the moment that they decided to fight the rebellion, there could be no doubt of the issue. The strength of the peasant population

on their vast estates was far greater, once it was mobilized, than the strength of the widely scattered cities. By the beginning of April 1521 the rebels had been met and defeated everywhere. The cities of Toledo and Valladolid alone held out. Finally on 23rd April, five days after Charles had first confronted Luther at Worms, the victory of Villala ended the revolt.

Charles had certainly made the best of a bad business. And a very good best it was. His enforced absence in Germany had in the end proved fortunate, for by setting the nobles against the towns he had been able to suppress the revolt without cost to himself. And further, not on him, but on the nobles would be focussed the hatred of the broken rebels; when he returned to Spain he would be able to return as judge rather than as combatant. The revolt which in the beginning had been a revolt against himself, had at the end become transformed into war between the old enemies, nobles and cities: fate, aided by his own skill, had sidetracked a very dangerous menace to his authority in Spain.

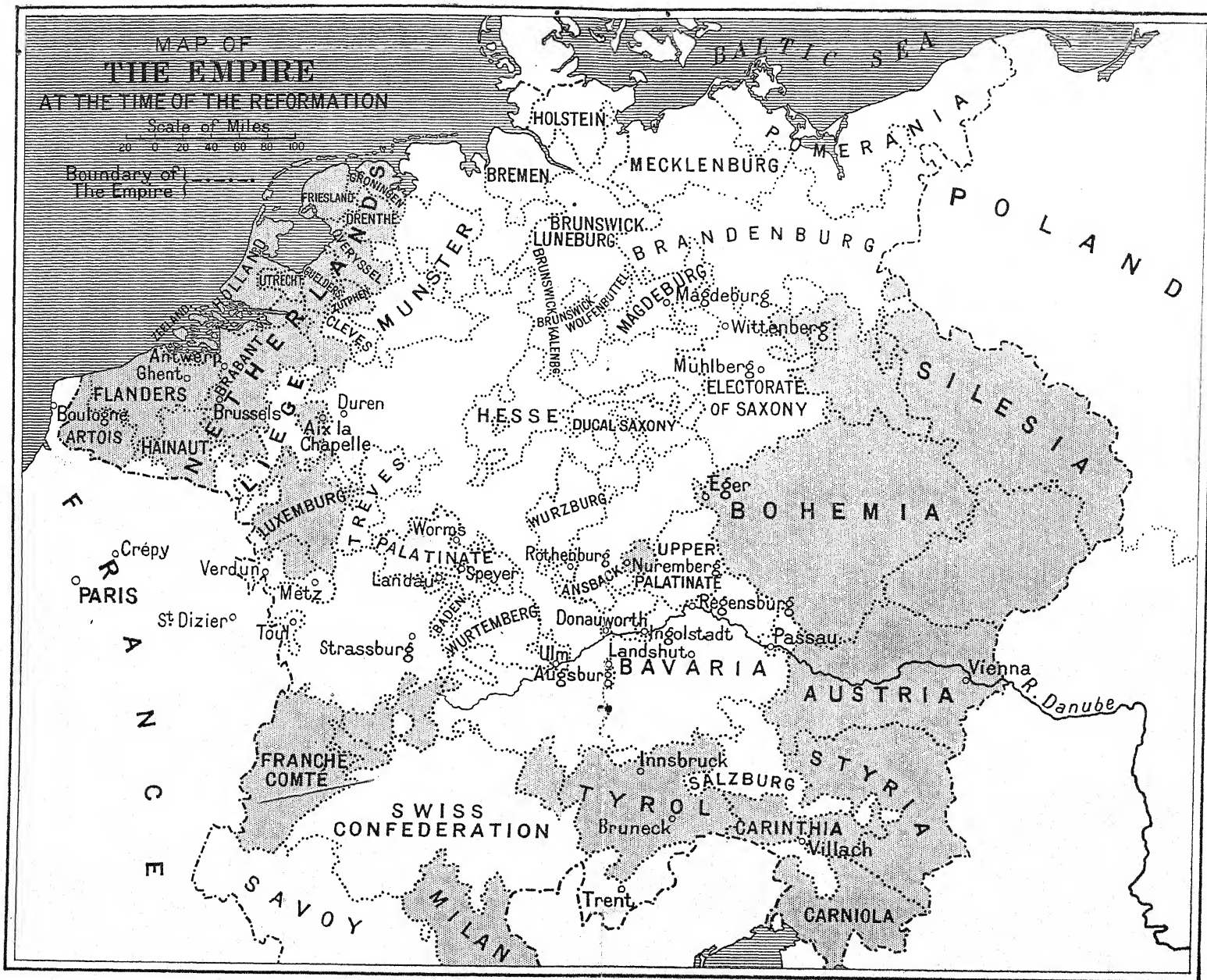
Henceforward Charles had no further trouble in Spain. If he was never popular, he was henceforth just. He had learned his lesson, and was till the end of his reign scrupulous in refusing posts in Spain to foreigners.

The death of Chièvres may have been a

blessing in disguise. It forced Charles to think and act for himself. If the powerful minister had been still alive when Charles returned to Spain, his very presence would have been a perpetual offence, and he would very probably have continued to place Flemish friends in Spanish posts. But on the death of Chièvres, Charles became master of his own actions. In Germany he had quickly had his chance to prove his worth; he seized it and made signally good use of it. Not for nothing had he the famous projecting jaw of the Hapsburgs: Spinelli had been right; he showed grit and courage in a difficult situation, he was of good "stomak and couraggy and fast in his determynacions."

Had Charles but a single dominion to rule we might foretell for him success. But how can he rule all the dominions that are his? A wiser or a weaker man, staggered by the prospect, might refuse to undertake so much. But Charles's jaw, his "fast determynacion," is the key to his character; neither a genius, nor a shirker, he is just sturdily determined to do his duty. And that is much—whether the result be success or failure.

MAP OF THE EMPIRE  
*(Hapsburg territories are shaded)*







## PART II

1521-1541

### CHAPTER V

#### A GREAT OPPORTUNITY

1521-1526

FROM Germany Charles hastened to the Netherlands. And well might he hasten.

The speed of a greyhound and the cunning of a fox were what he now needed. What he had was youth, determination, and his cherished childhood's ambition to lead Christendom against the Turk. Champion of the Church, he had fronted the German heretics boldly and justly. He longed to turn from heretic to infidel. For the Turks were threatening Christendom. In the East the Sultan's armies were advancing on Austria and Hungary: to check their advance Charles depended on his brother Ferdinand, to whom he had given his Austrian possessions. But in the West too the Turks were a menace: Turkish ships were scouting in the western Mediterranean. Charles burned to sweep away these naval raiders. But he had to postpone the day of settlement with the infidel because Christendom was not united. Modern Europe was shaping itself: Christendom was splitting

into powerful states, and the days of war between Christian states had begun. While Christian monarchs, urged by fear, jealousy, greed, and hate, grappled with each other, the lucky infidel could do pretty much as he pleased. So it was that the Champion of the Church had to face a nearer and more serious danger than the Turk; for the Most Christian King, Francis I of France—his lifelong and persistent enemy—was attacking him. Unscrupulous, dissolute, and vain as a peacock Francis was determined to bring low the young Emperor whose power he feared. He was now ready. Already French armies had made raids across the Netherlands frontier, and across the Pyrenees into Navarre. Charles had no time to rest on the laurels gained in Germany. He must show his grit again.

Charles had so many frontiers to protect that the aid or neutrality of the Pope and of Henry VIII were almost vital to his success. Since their quiet talk at Gravelines Charles believed he could depend upon his uncle's neutrality. But he wanted more: if Henry could be persuaded to attack northern France, he would do yeoman service to the Netherlands, and Charles could then devote his attention to Italy. And Italy, Charles knew, would be the chief battlefield. Rich and cultured Italy tempted Francis as an apple orchard tempts a boy. No notice—'Trespassers will be prosecuted'—would stop

Francis raiding Italy. The dogs of war must be there to stop him.

Charles was not himself lord of all Italy. Nor did he want to be. Italy was divided into a number of states, and Charles only wished to prevent Francis from conquering them, dictating to the Pope, and menacing his own position in Naples. There were five important states in Italy: in the south Naples, which was ruled by Spain; the states of the Church in the centre, and Florence, ruled by the House of Medici to which Leo belonged, and therefore in friendly relations with the Pope; in the north, Venice, who pursued a policy of cautious neutrality in the attempt to preserve her waning power, and Milan, ruled by the French. Of the lesser states the most important because of its sea-power was Genoa, which was under the influence of France. Thus, in war between Charles and Francis, the Pope, Leo X, with his central states held a valuable position: he could either give Francis a passage to the frontier of Naples, or enable Charles to attack Milan.

Charles and Francis each strove to gain Leo's help. It would be invaluable; and Leo knew it, for he was no dullard. But, one might suppose, the Holy Father would be sure to support the Emperor, who by virtue of his office was Champion of the Church? Not at all. Leo was prince first, Pope afterwards: a gay fellow, an ambitious

prince, a bad pope. He loved his temporal more than his spiritual power. He had done his best to set these Christian Kings at each other's throats, so that he might sell his alliance to one of them for an increase of territory. But Leo had not much courage. Having egged them on to war he could not make up his mind whom to back. And he was afraid that if he did back the winner, the winner, flushed with victory, might be greedy enough to keep everything for himself. A powerful and victorious Emperor, who was also King of Naples, might swallow all Italy; a victorious France firmly planted in Milan would be sure to stretch greedy arms southwards. Faint-hearted Leo finally decided to back the weaker, believing that his aid would bring victory to the weaker, but victory not overwhelming enough to make the victor dangerous. Leo decided that Charles was the weaker of the two. So it was that the Champion of the Church gained the alliance of the Holy Father. The interminable negotiations had been going on all the time Charles was in Germany: perhaps Leo supported Charles in order to gain his help in exterminating German heresies. The Treaty was signed immediately after the publication of the Edict of Worms, Charles promising Parma and Piacenza to the Pope in the event of victory.

So young Charles hastened to the Netherlands, assured of the Pope's aid in the war. Scarcely



had he entered the Netherlands before the French armies became active, burning and pillaging the villages of west Flanders and Hainault. Charles went to the front. His armies laid siege to the French fortress of Tournai. But Tournai held out, and the French troops had the better of the fighting. And in Milan the Papal-Imperial troops had no success against the French. Charles secured the alliance of Henry VIII, but Henry had no intention of wasting men or money on the war, and his minister Wolsey pressed more and more for peace as week followed week. Nowhere was there an important battle, but everywhere Charles's forces met with reverses. In Italy the French continued to hold Milan unscathed, and an attempt to turn the French party out of Genoa failed. Stubbornly Tournai withstood the besiegers. Charles had gained nothing in the war, and the cost of his armies was draining his resources. England's efforts as an ally were limited to urging the impossibility of continuing the war to any profit. In season and out of season Wolsey, most powerful of English ministers, preached peace. But he found to his surprise that Charles was a hard nut to crack. Very different was he from the meek boy who had visited England a year ago. Charles was determined to fight on, and in November he even persuaded Wolsey to renew the alliance.

Charles's determination had its reward,

Within a few days of the renewal of the English alliance came good news indeed. The city of Milan had fallen! Swiftly afterwards the other towns of the Milanese capitulated, and the whole of that state was in the hands of the Papal-Imperial forces. Parma and Piacenza were conquered and handed over to Leo. And in the north Tournai at last opened its gates to Charles's armies. The end of the year saw Charles everywhere victorious, and Wolsey's gloomy prophecies disproved.

And faint-hearted Leo? He had backed the winner, and the winner had honestly handed over Parma and Piacenza. The fruits of victory, schemed for so long and so cunningly, were his at last. But not his the joy of possessing them. He died on 1st December.

Early the next year (1522) the French made a determined effort to recover Milan, but they were beaten off and finally decisively defeated at the Battle of Bicocca (April). Moreover, at last the French party were turned out of Genoa. Charles was visiting England on his way to Spain when he learned of the victory of Bicocca. The news had its effect on Henry. Unhelpful ally though he had been, he no doubt congratulated himself on being on the winning side, and he now even stirred himself to dispatch English troops to invade Picardy while English ships of war hovered off the Norman coast.

Meanwhile Charles reached Spain. Determined to prevent further trouble from his Spanish subjects by a show of force, he brought with him 4,000 German troops and a train of 74 guns. This medicine had its effect, though he only shook the bottle in their faces. Impressive was the sight of those guns hauled across the mountains from Santander to Valladolid. It took 2,128 mules to drag the guns, and their drivers were 1,064. The Spaniards watched with wonder in their eyes and submission in their hearts. For the guns were heavier than any they had seen. And the names of some of the guns still survive—*The Great Devil*, *The Young He-Ass* and *The Young She-Ass*, and *The Wait-for-me-I'm-Coming-There*.

Throughout the year Charles remained in Spain, and throughout 1523. There was little active fighting in 1523, but Charles had great diplomatic success. He had already the alliance of Henry VIII and of the new Pope, Clement VII. Into this alliance against Francis now came Venice and Genoa, and nearly all the smaller states of Italy. Charles's position in Italy seemed impregnable: the Italian orchard seemed safe from Francis's raids.

Early in 1524 Charles made proposals of peace. Whereat Francis, vain and impertinent as ever, talked as if he had won the victory; he refused to make any sacrifice. Charles was

indignant; he saw then that the only hope of a lasting peace in Christendom, a peace that would enable him to turn his forces against the Turk, was to crush Francis utterly. Charles sternly set himself to dismember France.

Charles's plans were soon ready. He had for some time been secretly negotiating with the Constable Bourbon, a powerful French noble who was discontented with the selfish extravagance of Francis; it was now arranged that Bourbon should revolt and turn his forces against Francis. At the same time Henry VIII was to invade France with a large army; and the main Imperial army would advance from Italy to the invasion of Provence and the conquest of Marseilles. Charles himself would from Spain create a diversion in Languedoc. When Francis was beaten Bourbon was to be rewarded with an independent kingdom in central and southern France, and the French Crown itself was to be given to Henry VIII, while Charles would be well satisfied with ridding himself of the pest, Francis.

The plan was good, but it failed. Bourbon's conspiracy was discovered: Bourbon fled. Henry VIII instead of invading France negotiated secretly for peace: he was afraid of Charles's growing power. Charles could not obtain from the Cortes the supplies necessary to enable him to make his promised diversion in Languedoc.



And lack of supplies ruined the invasion of Provence upon which his main forces embarked. The great invading army was forced to retreat into Italy. It retreated, but it was not routed. The Spanish rearguard gave the harassing French troops as good as they got, and in admirable order the guns were taken to pieces, packed on mules, and withdrawn. There was no panic, no stampede. Stubbornly, courageously the Imperial army retreated through Milan with the French snapping at their heels. They retreated until they reached Lodi and the river Adda. There with their backs to Venice they halted. Besides Lodi, of all Milan one other fortress, Pavia, alone remained to the Imperialists.

Francis in person was with the French army. He might now either attack the weary Imperialist army on the Adda or assault Pavia which barred his way southwards. He decided to assault Pavia. He thought victory would be his quicker through the fall of Pavia; and beyond Pavia stretched all Italy tempting and defenceless; and the fall of Pavia would frighten Florence and Clement VII, both of whom were preparing to desert the Imperial ship now that it showed signs of sinking.

Francis laid siege to Pavia (1525). The Imperialist army advanced from the Adda to its relief; the army was starving, it was unpaid, but its spirit was unconquerable. It could not tempt the French from their entrenchments. Certain



death by starvation or the desperate task of assaulting the entrenchments—these were the alternatives. They decided to attack, and the day they chose was Charles's birthday, 24th February.

Dawn of the 24th found them battering on the entrenchments. The French artillery caught them on the flank: they stood firm. The French cavalry charged: their fire withered the charge. But at length the Imperial centre gave way, and—"Victory!" cried the French. Then the Imperialist generals concentrated on one final effort, and at the same time the Imperialists in Pavia made a sortie. The French broke. In a last desperate charge Francis himself was unhorsed and captured. The victory was complete.

To Charles in Spain the news was brought: "The battle is fought, and the King is your prisoner." And Charles withdrew to his room, and knelt down and prayed at his bedside. France was a Christian power, and Charles allowed no public rejoicings at the disaster that had befallen her. "In all his good fortune," wrote the Papal envoy, "he has behaved with the modesty of a truly religious man."

Charles's generals had won for him a great victory: what use would he make of it?

Charles could not continue the war and dismember France; he had no money to pay his troops, many of whom, German mercenaries,

were already beginning to desert. Accordingly a truce was made at once. The captive Francis was brought to Spain in June: he was treated with respect, and his captivity was made as pleasant as possible. But not until September did Charles visit him, and then only on learning that his royal prisoner was ill. Francis was probably shamming: he was weary of waiting and was vain enough to believe that if he could see Charles he would be able to get the better of him. After all he's only a boy, he thought. Charles came to his bedside. Francis raised himself up in bed, saying: "Here I am, my Lord Emperor, your servant and your slave." "Not so," replied Charles, "you are my good friend and brother, and I hope that you will always be so."

During all these weeks Charles had listened to the conflicting advice of his ministers. Some advised the harshest terms, to avoid further trouble: others counselled generosity, to gain Francis's goodwill. Charles listened and gradually formed his own determination. Calm and determined, moved neither to harshness nor generosity, he asked only for what he considered just: Francis must abandon all claims to Genoa and Milan, must restore all places captured on the Netherlands frontier, and must in person lead an army in a crusade against the Turks, and in the suppression of heretics.

After many weeks, on 13th January 1526, Francis signed the Treaty of Madrid. The next day an altar was placed in his room, a service was held, and he swore upon the Bible to keep his oath. Asked for his knightly word of honour, he gave his promise as a Christian gentleman to keep his oath or return to prison in six weeks. Then for five days Charles and Francis were as brothers. At the last before parting they stood alone before a roadside crucifix, and Francis swore again to keep his word or be for ever called a miserable scoundrel.

Francis had lied. He had never for a minute intended to keep his word. He maintained it was not given freely, but by force. The moment he was on French soil he sprang upon his horse, crying : "Now I am King, I am King once more!"

Gone were the fruits of Pavia. Charles had lost a great chance. He wanted peace in Christendom that he might fight the infidels. Generosity might have given it him, harshness might have compelled it: his own demands by their very justice were his undoing, and his own sincerity blinded him to the basic falsity of the French King. The bird had flown now, and while he was alive and had the power ceased never from warring and intriguing against Charles.

## CHAPTER VI

### THE SACK OF ROME

1526-1527

**I**N 1526 Charles married Isabella, the Infanta of Portugal. Kings seldom marry for love: Charles wrote to his brother Ferdinand that he was marrying Isabella because of the handsome dowry she would bring, and because she would be useful to leave behind as ruler during his absences from Spain. Charles was very fortunate in his choice. Isabella was twenty-three, small and thin: but her heart was true and her head clear, and if Charles did not love her when he married her, he fell in love with her afterwards. While she lived he seldom stayed long away from Spain: after her death Spain scarcely saw him until his final return to die.

The wedding and brief honeymoon are a pleasant happy interlude between two important political events in Charles's career. The first event was Pavia, the second is the sack of Rome, the subject of this chapter.

After Pavia, Europe suspected Charles of aiming at European dominance. Kings, princes, ambassadors, ministers feared the young Emperor who went his way calmly, gravely, with determination in his eye and jaw, but few words



on his lips. His goal must surely be supremacy in Europe. Already ruler of the Netherlands, Spain, Germany, Naples, he had, it is true, aimed at the dismemberment of France, and he had actually achieved supremacy in Italy: but only that he might rid himself of a pest and be free to do his duty as the Church's Champion against the Turks. His conduct after Pavia showed that he had neither the ability, nor the inclination for European dominance. He did not like work now any more than when he had been a boy; he did not hanker after new kingdoms, but he was "fast in his determynacion" to defend himself and his territories when they were attacked. When Francis broke his word he was angry, but he shirked the bother of doing anything; it was much pleasanter to be married and to enjoy oneself in the sunshine of Spain. Hunting was good fun, and riding was good fun, and eating was good; indeed, he had a remarkable appetite: a specimen dinner consisted of some big slices of beef, followed by roast mutton, followed by braised hare, followed by chicken—and the whole lot bolted, since his protruding jaw made chewing wellnigh impossible. He went to church daily, and he desired nothing better than a lazy life of good fare and good sport. He was just a fair honest gentleman; but he did what he considered to be his duty when troubles came—as they constantly came—and



always he refused to budge from his just demands in the hour of victory.

Unfortunately, honest gentlemen amongst the ruling princes of Europe were as scarce as mushrooms in spring. We have seen the sort of gentleman Francis was: not much better was the new Pope, Clement VII.

Clement VII, like Leo X, was of the House of Medici. Like Leo he cared much for the temporal and little for the spiritual power of the Papacy. Leo intended to enjoy the Papacy, and he did enjoy it: Clement, though ambitious, was too timorous to enjoy it. Like a frightened cat given a saucer of milk, he was always looking round to see if anyone were coming to take it away.

Clement was clever—far too clever. He had continued the alliance with Charles, that Leo had signed in 1521, because he wanted to increase his power and territory: Charles seemed to be winning, so he must obviously back the winner. But when the tide of war had turned, when in 1524 the Imperialist army retreated, when at last it halted wearily on the line of the Adda, then Clement began to think very hard. He came to the conclusion that Charles was on the eve of utter defeat; and he signed a secret treaty of alliance with Francis. But Charles's ambassadors got to know of this treaty, and "I shall go to Italy," said Charles, "and have

a fairer opportunity of taking my revenge . . . on that villain Pope."

On hearing the news of Pavia Clement became "as a dead man." And well he might. He had been too clever. But Charles, who needed the friendship of the Papacy, was unexpectedly moderate, and used his victory to renew the Papal alliance. With the French King still a captive, Clement must have breathed again: he agreed eagerly to the alliance, neither from love nor fear of Charles, but because Charles's star was in the ascendant.

Followed Francis's freedom and denial of his word. Again poor Clement became very worried. Had he, after all, been wise to ally himself with Charles? Charles seemed unpopular and dangerous; Francis was busy forming a league against him. Like a weathercock, Clement veered with every change of wind. But by May 1526, urged by the English and French ambassadors who argued that Charles wanted to make himself master of the world and the Pope his chaplain, he once more definitely sided against Charles. A league was formed of France, the Pope, Florence, Venice, Milan, and England. Charles's authority in Italy had vanished.

But the league did nothing. Francis after his captivity was bent on the enjoyments of flirtation at Court: it was pleasanter to conquer ladies

with pretty speeches, than to conquer Charles with the sword. Henry VIII, as usual anxious for others to do the dirty work, had no intention of wasting time or money in a war. And so by the beginning of 1527 the league had practically fallen to pieces.

Meanwhile Charles threatened and coaxed Clement by turns: and the wretched Clement, not knowing what to do, did nothing. He would not definitely ally himself with Charles; he made half promises one day, only to withdraw them the next. Charles was very naturally irritated by this dallying. The outlook for him was not bright. Since Pavia his army of Spaniards and Germans, depleted by desertion, had remained near the field of battle. Short of money as always, Charles could neither pay, nor feed, nor clothe the troops. They lived as they could, plundering the neighbourhood. Charles received urgent requests for money and instructions. But of money he had none, and as for instructions—he could not make up his mind what to do.

Now the Pope was still actually in alliance with Francis against Charles, and there were many who were urging Charles to make war in grim earnest against him. "All the harm that you can do the Pope is lawful, considering his ingratitude, and want of respect for the service of God and Christendom." Charles began to give serious attention to these counsels. Further parleying

with the Pope was useless. War and victory over him would bring plunder: plunder would pay the troops. But Charles, save in moments of anger, shrank from the idea of using the sword against the Holy Father. But I might threaten him, brandish the sword in his face, he at length decided. Accordingly he wrote to Bourbon, who was now leader of the army, instructing him to march on Rome and dictate terms outside its walls.

Charles, had he known it, need not have written. Letters took nearly two months in transit from Spain to Italy, and by the time his instructions arrived the army had taken matters into its own hands with a vengeance.

The army mutinied. Twenty thousand men, Germans, Spaniards, and some Italians, half starved and in rags, they clamoured for plunder, since they could get no pay. And what city more tempting to plunder than Rome? They demanded to be led to Rome; and only by agreeing could Bourbon maintain any control or discipline amongst them. And so, half crazy with hunger and suffering, this terrible host of mutineers staggered southwards through sunny Italy. They abandoned their guns. They had no transport, no food. They must have crumpled up before the slightest opposition. But the road was clear. They met no opposition. And on the evening of 5th May, like lean and hungry wolves scenting

their prey, they arrived before the walls of Rome.

Day dawned. Thick mist veiled the city. Desperately the maddened host flung itself on the western walls. Rome was full of able-bodied men, but they did not like fighting. Barely 500 could be mustered for defence. Yet the attacking mutineers wavered in their first onslaught. Then Bourbon sprang forward to a ladder to scale the wall. With his foot on the second rung he was shot down. But his example inspired his men. There was no more wavering. Into the city they poured like a great tidal wave, over the scanty defenders. Clement barely escaped to the fortress of St. Angelo where, quaking in confinement, he watched and listened to what followed. The hunger-maddened ruffians gave themselves up to the work of plunder. And never had there been such plunder. For centuries all the wealth of Christendom had flowed into Rome. Rome was the financial capital of the world. In her stately palaces were amassed fabulous treasures. Such was the booty that lay at the tender mercy of Charles's mutineers. They wasted no time. Coin, jewels, gold and silver plate, clothes, tapestries, furniture were theirs for the taking. And blood was theirs for the spilling. For weeks they ran amok in the Eternal City. For weeks they gorged themselves with food and drink, with pleasure, and with



treasure. And Clement, from within the fortress of St. Angelo, saw the sky blackened with the smoke of burning palaces and temples.

The news of the sack of Rome swept like a gale through the length and breadth of Christendom. Rome, the Eternal City, the capital of Christendom, rent and torn by foul sacrilegious hands, pillaged by savage hordes of Spaniards and Germans!

And Charles was held responsible. Upon Charles were poured the curses of the Catholic world. Upon the captive Clement was lavished the world's sympathy.

And Charles—how did he receive the news? Charles had just become a father. He was proudly celebrating the birth of little Philip. Great tournaments and festivities were afoot, and Charles himself, an able horseman, was taking part. The tidings came: Rome is sacked. Well? What if Rome was sacked, and that villain Pope a prisoner? That was no reason assuredly for stopping the programme of rejoicings! So he may have thought to himself, and added—the Pope has got his deserts.

But when the news spread amongst the people, all, rich and poor, were deeply stirred. The Pope a prisoner! The Holy Father, appointed of God, beset by German ruffians! Rome sacked and burned! Ah! This is no time for pleasure and rejoicings, but for mourning and prayer!

And Charles, quickly perceiving how the people regarded the news, put a stop to the festivities and ordered the Court to go into mourning. He had not commanded the sack of Rome, though the army had done what in his angry moments he may have wished. He probably thought Clement richly deserved what he had got, but he dared not defy public opinion.

## CHAPTER VII

“CARLO! CARLO! IMPERO! IMPERO!”

1527-1530

WHAT is this that men are saying one to another, when the first horror of the news from Rome has passed? It is God's judgment! The hand of God is in this!

Nay more: it is whispered that now the Pope will have to surrender his temporal power, and be, as of old, just the spiritual head of Christendom, the chief Bishop of the Church.

Of old, Rome and Italy had been held directly by the Emperor. Rome and all Italy were now at Charles's mercy; and Spain was his, and the Netherlands; and he was overlord of Germany; and but lately Francis was at his feet. Might it be that the old united Empire of Christendom was about to be restored in all its power and glory? The unity of Christendom beneath God's representatives, the Pope and Emperor—this was an end worth striving for. Could this splitting up of the Christian peoples into rival states be arrested? Already have begun those wars between nations, wars costly in money and in blood, that have continued, growing more costly and murderous with every century, down to to-day. Might not Charles have stepped in and

of his power arrested the break-up of Christendom? To-day, 400 years later, men are striving to prevent war between nations by means of the League of Nations. If Charles in 1527 had seized his chance, might he not have stopped the growth of the nations themselves, have made Europe one, beneath the authority of himself and the Pope, rulers of Christendom?

Charles could not prevent the world from growing. If he had attempted to restore the old Christian Empire the history of Europe's growth would have been different, but still it would have grown, and since it had already begun to grow into nations, it would probably have continued to grow into nations somehow.

But Charles did not make the attempt. His mind ambled on at a steady jog-trot. His minister Gattinara cried: "Your Majesty is on the straight road to universal dominion." Charles listened but did not want universal dominion. He was too conservative to make sweeping changes. The pigsty of Rome had been cleansed, and he never dreamed of the pigs not going back into it. He had no thought of restoring the old mediaeval world, nor of carving out a new world: he simply considered how to make the best of things as they were. Quite justly for instance he disclaimed responsibility for the sack; but he intended to make use of it. That slippery eel, Clement, was now caught; what should he do

with him? Clement a prisoner, Italy at his mercy; Charles did not know what to do. The Venetian ambassador in Spain writes home: "The Emperor is by nature slow, and in the present situation is very doubtful what he ought to do. On the one hand it seems to him fair to release the Pope, while on the other he does not feel sure of securing his Holiness's friendship even if he does."

At last in November a treaty was made. The Papal states were restored. The Pope was free once more. Six months had passed since the sack, and during those six months Charles lost all the fruits of victory. While he remained inactive in Spain his rival Francis was busy. He and England had allied themselves against Charles: French troops were active in northern Italy, and they were joined by Venetians and Milanese. Charles had but a slender force of 6,000 troops in northern Italy: these were quickly confined to the walls of Milan. The troops which had sacked Rome were a band of brigands, and no general dared take command of them. The French swept south to Naples. Early in 1528 Naples revolted against Spanish rule. By April 1528, scarcely a year after the sack of Rome, of all Italy Charles held only the two cities of Naples and Milan.

The Prince of Orange, who was in command at Naples, wrote despairing letters to Charles.



His troops, a motley band of Spaniards, Italians, and Germans, were living on bread and water. “Yet, Sire, neither they nor I can do more than the possible. Therefore, Sire, do not forget us.” But Charles did not seem to realize the urgency of the situation. And anyhow his position was difficult. He had lost Genoa, and the Genoese fleet, under its able admiral, Andrea Doria, together with the French and Venetian fleets, were supreme in the western Mediterranean. They cut off Charles from Italy. No Spanish ship could hope to reach Naples with either food or men. Further, Clement was playing his old double game, intriguing with if not actively helping the French, and the Spanish Cortes refused to grant Charles money because they said it would be used for war against His Holiness. Charles had neither the means nor the opportunity to help his brave troops in Naples or Milan. They were stranded. They and he could only wait and hope.

But time was on Charles’s side. Clement did not ally himself with Francis; and Francis, who by sending a few reinforcements to Italy could have swept the Imperial troops out of the country, was too busy flirting at Court and hunting in his forests to bother about the war. And presently Neapolitan towns, discovering that they disliked the French, began to pass over to the Emperor again. And then one act of crass

folly by the French King turned the tide definitely in favour of Charles. Francis imposed on Genoa a French governor and garrison, and deprived her of her freedom. Whereupon Andrea Doria went over to Charles, appeared with his fleet before Genoa, and forced the French garrison to surrender. His fleet, supreme in the western Mediterranean, enabled Charles to send supplies to his troops in Naples. Already in June the French had been beaten at Milan; in September the French army, which had been blockading Naples, surrendered. Once again Charles was supreme in Italy. Clement and Charles had already come to terms. After long negotiations on 3rd August 1529 the Treaty of Cambrai between Charles and Francis was signed. Francis abandoned all his Italian claims and allies.

Charles now himself set sail for Italy. He had been crowned Emperor in Germany, but he had not yet been crowned Emperor at Rome by the Pope, as of old the Emperors were crowned. On 12th August the Imperial fleet put into the port of Genoa. The galley which bore Charles was rowed by 200 liberated slaves: her sails were of black and yellow damask, and bore the Imperial arms; her ropes were of silk. She swept into the port, her great oars churning the placid waters—a noble sight. Cannon roared. Every ship lowered its sails and from thousands rose the cry “Carlo! Carlo! Impero! Impero! God

bless and preserve the King of the World!" The elders of the city stepped out upon a long, wooden platform to welcome the Emperor. And Charles landed, for the first time setting foot on Italian soil where his troops had so often fought. He was dressed in robes of white, and followed by his three companies of German, Spanish, and Flemish guards.

From Genoa Charles journeyed to Bologna. He was anxious to be in Germany whither his brother Ferdinand bade him hasten as grave troubles demanded his presence. It was therefore arranged that the coronation should take place in Bologna to save time.

Clement had been awaiting Charles at Bologna for a fortnight. On 24th February 1530 the ancient ceremony took place. Fourteen guns headed the procession; then, seven abreast, marched 3,000 Germans with banners flying and beating drums; then, in fives, 3,000 Spanish harquebusiers, and 3,000 picked Italian troops. In the square around the Cathedral the troops deployed, and hither came Charles escorted by a band of light Italian horse. And in the Cathedral Clement set upon his head the crown of the Empire. Poor Clement had no love for Charles; he did not enjoy the task of crowning him. "The Pope tried to show the Emperor the best cheer possible," writes a bishop who was present, "... but several times when he thought no

one saw him he heaved such sighs that heavy as his cope was, he made it shake in good earnest."

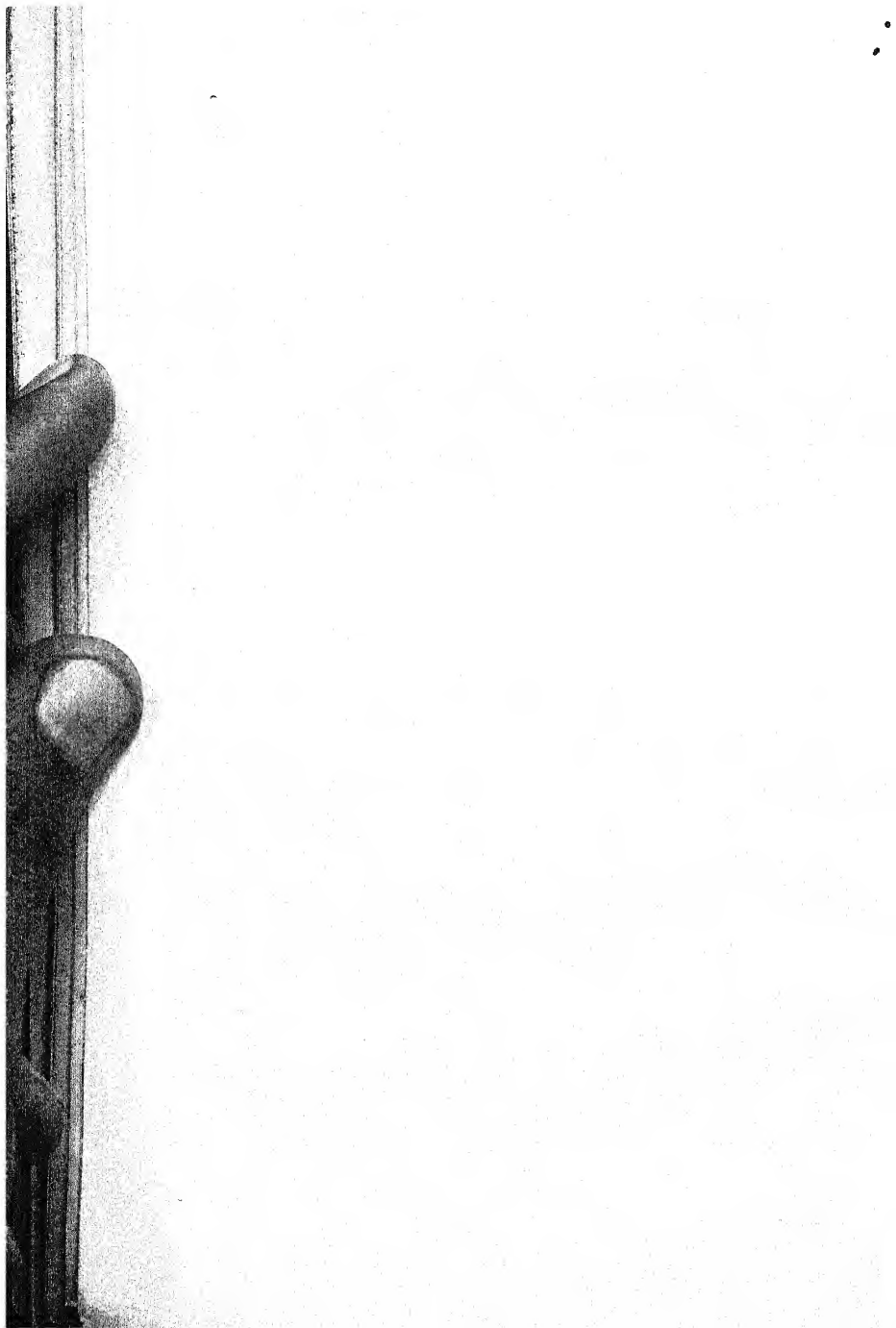
This year, 1530, marks practically the end of Charles's wars in Italy. The reversals of fortune in these wars had been swift: in 1524 after Pavia Charles might have made himself supreme in Italy, but his slowness and his fairness lost him the fruits of victory; in 1527, after the sack of Rome, once again all Italy was at his mercy, but his inactivity had a year later whittled his Italian possessions down to the cities of Naples and Milan. Now once again the destiny of Italy was in his hands. Francis was expelled and the Pope had crowned him Emperor.

Immediately after the coronation Charles hastened across the Brenner to Germany, leaving behind him an Italy that was at peace. But before he left he set on foot arrangements, which he completed during the next five or six years, to ensure the continuance of that peace.

Charles had no desire to impose his rule on the free states of Italy. He was not greedy for conquest; already, like the old woman who lived in a shoe, he had so many kingdoms he didn't know what to do. The wars in Italy had not been of his own seeking; they had been provoked by Francis and the Popes. Charles's aim now was to ensure lasting peace in Italy; and this he knew was impossible until the gates of Italy were







firmly shut against Francis. He must attach all the rulers of the Italian states so firmly to himself that they would never again ally themselves with the ever-ready Francis, never give his wily rival an excuse for sending armies to the peninsula. Naples was his and would remain faithful: the Pope with his states needed Charles's aid in Germany too much to go to war: in Florence Charles restored the House of Medici which henceforth staunchly supported him: to Genoa Charles had granted independence, and she henceforth with her brave admiral, Andrea Doria, and her rich bankers, served him loyally: Venice was neutral and in time favoured Charles: to the Duke of Milan he married one of his nieces: to the heir of Mantua he gave another niece: to the King of Savoy-Piedmont he married his sister-in-law, Beatrice of Portugal. Beatrice was devoted to Charles, and the Duchy of Savoy-Piedmont formed an admirable barrier between France and Italy. Thus Charles managed to fasten to himself all the more important states of Italy by ties of friendship or relationship. Francis, looking over the barrier of Savoy-Piedmont, saw no friendly encouraging faces in Italy. Charles maintained garrisons of Spanish troops in the cities, and he taxed the states heavily for their upkeep. The Spanish troops were proud and unpopular; the taxes were grumbled at. But Charles gave Italy peace

and rest, and, in so doing, served her better than he knew.

Rest was Italy's greatest need. For a hundred years she had suffered from incessant wars. At first they had been purely civil wars, between rival political factions whose quarrels kept each state in a fever of activity. But later the warring factions had invited foreign aid, and from that moment the roads of Italy for ever echoed with the tramp of foreign soldiery come to aid this party or that. Like a sick man Italy had tossed in a fever of war. She was now quite exhausted; and Charles, the doctor, forced her to lie still. The drug of Spanish power sent her to sleep; it was a long troubled sleep, from which she awoke in the nineteenth century with strength recovered and health restored and made herself at last a free and united nation.

Italy hated the Spanish foreigners, and Charles was no doubt thinking more of his own welfare than of Italy's. But he served Italy well all the same.

CHAPTER VIII  
GERMANY. THE PROGRESS OF  
PROTESTANTISM

1521-1532

FOR nine years Charles had not been in Germany. They had been eventful years for him—and for Germany.

While the Champion of the Church had been wrestling with the Most Christian King and the Holy Father, heresy had spread and grown strong in Germany. Charles had left Germany in 1521, flushed with success; he had been determined and he had been fair, and the Edict of Worms seemed to be a shrewd blow at Lutheranism. But as soon as Charles's back was turned Lutheran preachers were again active. After leaving Worms Luther had gone into hiding: he quickly reappeared, and began once more to preach the new Gospel. The Edict of Worms without Charles was as harmless as a gun unloaded.

Amongst the peasants especially the new Gospel fell on ready ears. Already discontented with their lot they heard in this Gospel teaching a trumpet call to arms. According to the Bible one man was as good as another, all were equal before God. Serfs must arise and fight for

liberty, the poor revolt against their oppressors. The only laws that merited obedience were the laws of God, which every man could find for himself in the Bible. Up then! Let each man fight for his rights, and wrest from the nobles and the rich lords of the Church power and riches which were not rightfully theirs! Renegade friars in secular costume and mercenary soldiers roved the country bearing the torch of revolution, till at last all Germany was ablaze.

The Peasant Revolt of 1525 at first met with some success, because it was unexpected. But soon the princes, thoroughly alarmed, mustered their strength; and then they crushed the peasants utterly and ruthlessly. And Luther went over to the princes. With horror he beheld the result of his teaching: he had never dreamed that the right of every man to live according to his conscience and the Bible would mean the overthrow of all order. Too late he preached patience; the fire he had lit was in full blaze, and he could not quench it; only the sword would avail now. So, with a violence born of terror, he urged the princes to their murderous work; they gave no quarter, showed no mercy.

By the end of 1525 the revolt was practically stamped out.

As in Spain in 1520-1521 law and order had been established by others in Charles's absence. Now, therefore, was the moment for Charles to



assert himself; and he knew it. It was not he who had crushed the peasants so bloodily. Him they would not hate. Let him but appear and he might attach them firmly to himself. And the princes, too, alarmed at the results of Lutheranism, would see the necessity of maintaining the Catholic religion and strong Imperial Government: they, too, would support him. The glory of Pavia (1525) still shone like a halo above him. Now was his moment.

But the moment passed, and Charles was afraid to leave Spain. Francis had broken his pledged word, and was busily building up a league against him: the Pope, if not his enemy, was a false friend. Danger threatened everywhere. Already the fruits of Pavia were lost, and with them was lost his opportunity in Germany.

Since Charles could not come to Germany, the more zealous Catholic princes formed a private league in defence of their religion and their rights; and some waverers turned back to the old Church, for they could not embrace doctrines that set the peasants in revolt against them.

'Once bitten, twice shy': Luther saw at once that this would be the effect of the revolt on wavering princes. Accordingly, when the revolt was over he proceeded to extract the teeth of his doctrine, so that it would not bite. In fact he set to work to make it a tame animal that the

princes would like: for if the princes would give it a home, it would be safe. Or, you might say, as a man changes his clothing to suit the weather, Luther changed his doctrine to suit the new circumstances: he changed it to suit the princes.

Thus in the revolt of 1525 the peasants died, but Lutheranism did not die. Lutheranism survived: a changed Lutheranism. The Bible and the individual conscience could not keep law and order. Then let the princes have authority in the new Church. They would be able to establish the Church as the peasants never could. The prince should be the head of the Church in his own state; he should take over the wealth and property of the Catholic Church, appoint and pay the ministers, and enforce belief. The prince henceforth should be Pope within his state: thus order would be ensured, and there would be no more peasants' revolts. And in the new Lutheran Church there would be none of the old superstitions, no sales of pardons, no costly penances: the Church's doctrine should be pure.

Luther leapt from the wreck of the peasantry to the stout ship of the princes, just in the nick of time. The power of the princes increased, as the power of the peasants was crushed: it continued to grow stronger, and with it Lutheranism grew stronger. It was a tempting bait that Luther offered the princes, and as time went on

more and more of them gulped it: for to be head of the Church added considerably to their power in their states.

Amongst the princes the standard bearers of Lutheranism were John of Saxony and Philip of Hesse. John of Saxony was one of the first professing Lutheran princes, as he was throughout his life the most courageous, sincere, and enthusiastic of them. He was not clever, but he was honest, and his sterling character gained the respect of his enemies. To him the Protestant Reformation owes much. Philip of Hesse was neither honest nor sincere, but clever he was. He was Lutheran because he saw profit to himself in the new doctrine: he was bold and unscrupulous, and had the brains to organize and extend the power of Lutheranism. Philip's brains and John's sterling character were the backbone of Lutheranism. In answer to the Catholic league these two princes gathered together some of the lesser German princes to form a Lutheran league.

This was the position when in August 1526 the Diet of Speyer met. The Diet decided that until the Pope should summon a council of the Church to a German city to consider Germany's demand for reform, every man should live in accordance with "his responsibility to God and the Empire." "Responsibility to God and the Empire!" Here was a chance for the Lutherans!

And they wasted no time. Their duty to the Emperor was to be Catholic, their duty to God to be Lutheran. Obviously their duty to God must come first! So during the next three years the Lutheran Church was established in many states with the prince at the head: it appropriated Catholic Church moneys and land in each state, and became a state Church, just as later in England under Henry VIII the national Church of England was established, and the Catholic Church land, moneys, and monasteries were confiscated.

Three years went by, and the Lutheran Church was firmly rooted in German soil.

Then in 1529 the Diet again met at Speyer. Charles, master of Italy and newly crowned at Bologna, was hastening to Germany. He wrote demanding of the Diet that the Edict of 1526 should be cancelled. He did not realize how deeply, how extensively "heresy" was planted. But the estates did: they knew he was asking the impossible; they contented themselves with forbidding further changes in religion, and demanding tolerance for Catholics in Lutheran states. The Lutheran reply was the famous Protest, from which they get their name of Protestants. They protested that their duty to God came before their duty to the Emperor. And they refused to allow Catholics to worship according to the rites of the Catholic Church in any Lutheran state.

At last Charles entered Germany. His hopes were high. Francis was beaten. He had settled Italy. Now to settle Germany, and then at last he could march against the Turks. He did not dream of failure. In 1521, when little more than a boy, he had been successful in Germany. And now he was a man whose name, whose triumphs, whose power were talked of in every court in Europe.

How should Charles know that the nine years of his absence had transformed the thousands of enthusiastic but unorganized Lutherans into an organized Church? How know that the seeds of Lutheranism had grown into sturdy plants, and multiplied, with their roots deep in the land? He had received his reports from Germany of course: but immersed in other problems he had failed to realize the urgency of German affairs. 'Seeing is believing': Charles too often would not believe until he saw. Now he had come to Germany. He was soon to see.

Charles entered Augsburg, a Lutheran city, whither he had summoned the Diet to meet him. It was remarked that he looked stronger and browner; and his chin boasted the beginnings of a beard. The day after his arrival was the Feast of Corpus Christi. Charles testified to his love of the Church and braved the scorn of the Lutheran townsfolk by walking for two hours in the Catholic procession through the town,



bareheaded beneath a fierce sun, and clad in a plain brown robe.

At the Diet the Lutherans offered a Confession of their Faith. The Catholic clergy at once prepared a Confutation which they submitted to Charles. He would not allow it to be published as it was. Five times he returned it to them, insisting that they should be more moderate. When at last it was published the theologians of the two parties began to argue their cases. Heated and interminable were the disputes. Charles, patiently waiting, soon saw that they would never agree. It was hopeless: figs do not grow on thistles, and agreement would never blossom from these prickly arguments. Yet all Germany must somehow be kept within the fold of his beloved Church, until the Pope should summon a council. Charles was determined to leave no stone unturned in his search for unity. He was not blind to the need of reform in the Catholic Church: he was quite willing to discuss matters with the Lutherans—only, the ancient authority of the Church and its essential doctrines must be preserved. Despairing at last of the arguments of the theologians, he appointed seven Catholic and seven Lutheran princes, asking them to consult together and submit a scheme to preserve the religious unity of Germany. For a time there was hope that the princes would succeed where the priests had

failed. Charles encouraged them, lending a willing and patient ear to each side, keeping his own temper, and calming the ruffled tempers of the disputants.

But all was in vain. It is even surprising that Charles persevered so long and approached so near to success: for the one man who could and should have made success possible was bent on bringing his efforts to naught. Charles's chief opponent, the bitterest enemy of agreement, was not Luther, but the Pope. Clement hated Charles. Clement feared Charles. Clement was determined to make no concessions to the Lutherans. The immediate summoning of a great Church council to deal with Germany's religious grievances provided the greatest chance of keeping Germany within the fold of the Church. Clement refused to consider the summoning of such a council. Clement had no wish for a council to expose abuses or prevent the continuance of them. Clement wished Charles to exterminate heresy with the sword: for a war against heretics, besides keeping Charles busy at a distance, would exhaust his money and power. So Clement's legate at Augsburg stirred up the Catholics to refuse concessions, and published fiery pamphlets which roused the tempers of the Lutherans.

Thus the princes failed to agree. Thanks to Clement, Charles's effort had failed. His

fairness and patience deserved a better reward. A leading Lutheran theologian praises his marvellous control of temper, saying that in him could be found no sign of greed, pride, or cruelty : " in this religious question he has always heard us in a judicial spirit."

Charles now had no alternative but to agree with the Catholic majority of the Diet, and reassert the Edict of Worms; but he gave the Lutherans six months to reconsider their demands, promising not to proceed against them during that time.

The six months Charles gave the Lutherans for thought they spent in arming. The Lutheran princes formed the League of Schmalkalde; they had become richer and more powerful by adopting the Lutheran creed, and they were now bent on becoming independent of the Emperor. They were arming for independence rather than religion, and they allied themselves with the Catholic King Francis, who was eager now, as always, to help Charles to trouble. They even had an understanding with the Turks, who were advancing on Ferdinand's Austrian territories.

The Champion of the Church was ringed in with foes, and those foes were the Holy Father of the Church, the King of the Infidels, a Protestant League of Princes, and the Most Christian King Francis! He could not possibly enforce the Edict of Worms, for the Pope was stirring

up trouble for him in Italy, Solymán was marching on Vienna at the head of a great Turkish force, and Francis was ready to attack him the moment war began with the League.

Charles, as ever, was burning to fling himself upon the Turk. Long enough had he been forced to wait. He decided now to compromise with the "heretic" that he might fight the infidel. At the Diet of Nuremburg (1532) he promised to take no steps against any German state on account of religion. The Diet, with its Catholic majority, refused to agree to such an edict. But the Lutherans trusted Charles, and his promise remained a private promise between himself and their leaders.

Charles was disgusted with the Pope and the Catholics. Moreover, he wished to raise an army of German mercenaries to fight Solymán, and these *landsnechts*, as they were called, were mainly Lutheran. Hence his private understanding with the Lutheran leaders.

The Lutherans came nobly to his aid. He collected a great army and joined his brother Ferdinand. He left Germany much as he had found it—divided against itself religiously and politically. With a united Germany behind him he would have been an Emperor indeed, supreme in Europe. This was what the Pope and Francis dreaded, and it was they he had to thank that his fairness, perseverance, and justice had failed.

The Turk whom he had now at last an opportunity of fighting, had no better friends than Francis and the Pope. There could be no peace in Europe, no united Christendom, while the greed and jealousy of Christian rulers, spiritual and temporal, fostered unending quarrels and strife.



CHAPTER IX  
AT WAR WITH THE INFIDEL

1533-1535

WHEN Charles joined Ferdinand at Vienna, Solyman had already had taste enough of Christian swords. The great Turkish army rolled back sullenly through Hungary. Charles was almost disappointed: he had hoped for "a jolly fight." But in the East the Turkish menace was over.

Not so in the West, however. In broad daylight infidel ships slid through the shining waters of the Mediterranean, swept down upon the sunlit shores of Italy and Spain, and left death and devastation where had been peace and quiet industry. Week by week these merciless marauders grew bolder, till Spain and Italy were clamouring for Charles to come and drive them away.

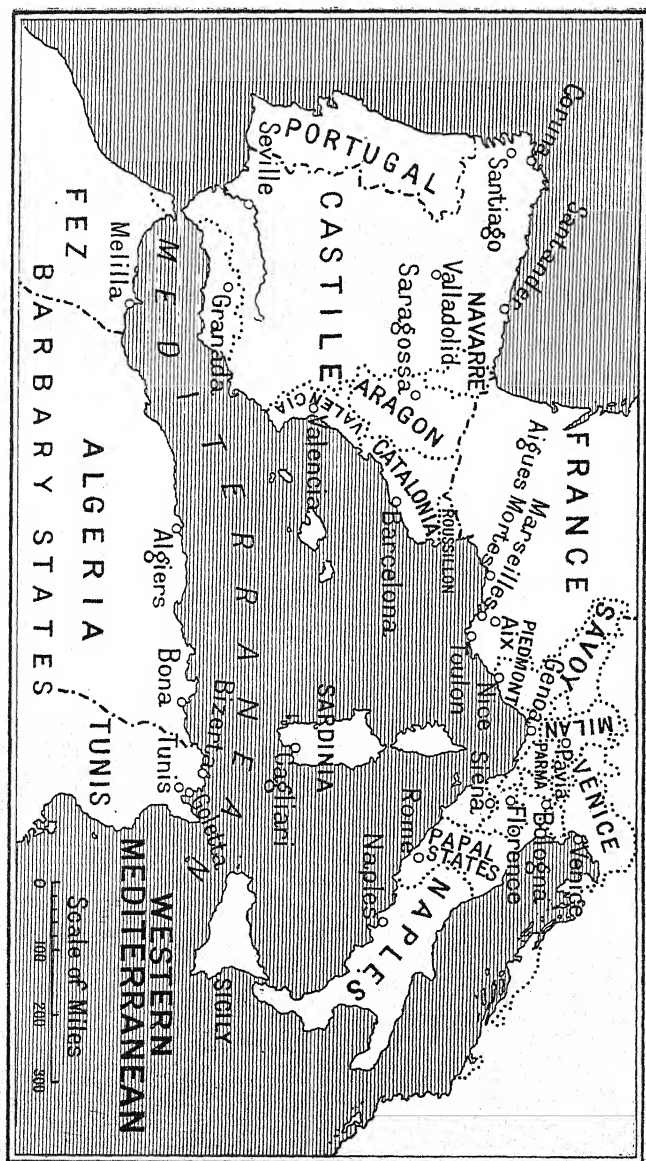
So Charles left Vienna for Spain.

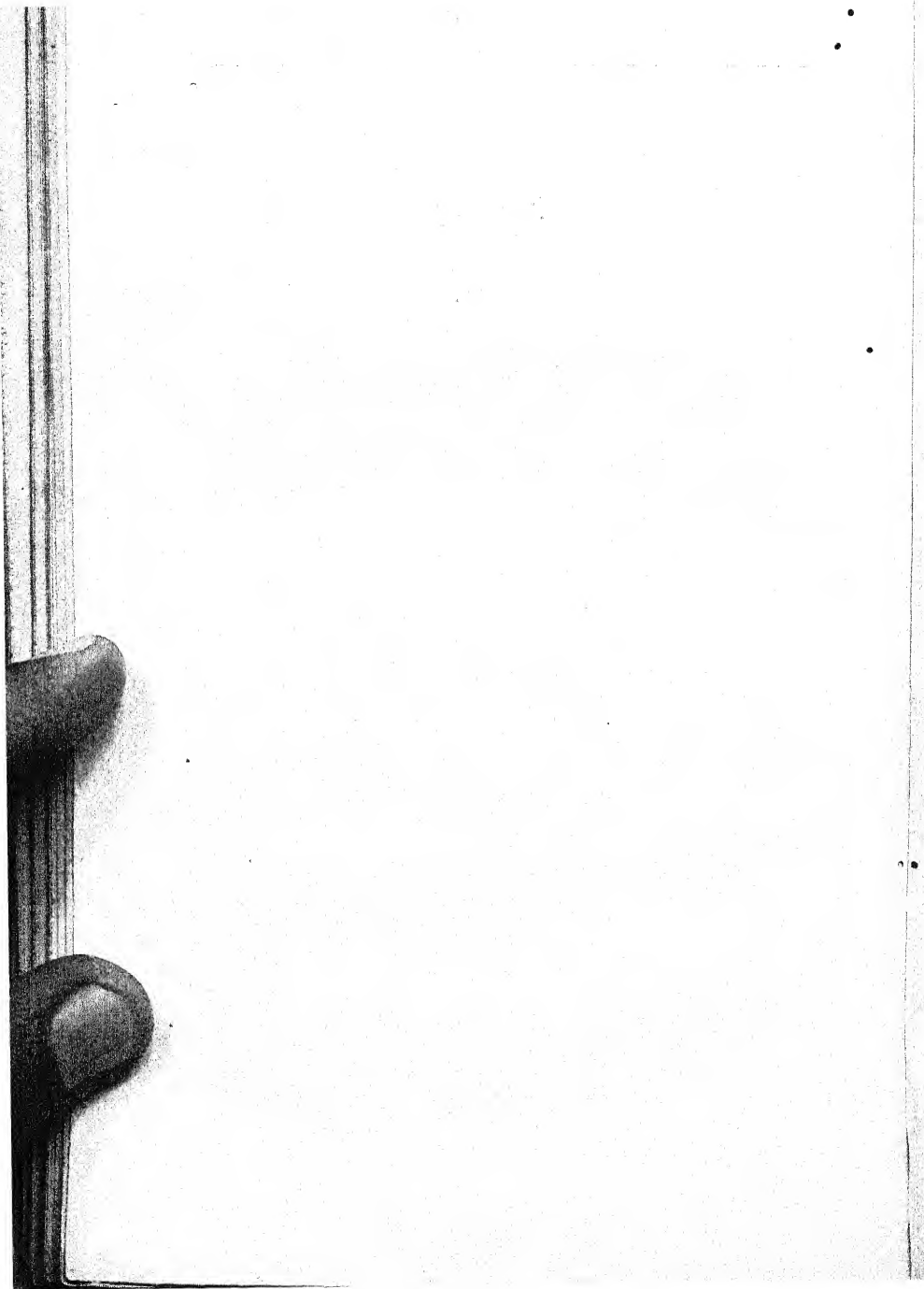
The incessant marauding attacks of the infidel ships were of recent date. When Charles as a boy first came to Spain from the Netherlands Turkish sea-power was not a real danger in the western Mediterranean. Rather did Christian ships harass the Turks in the eastern Mediterranean. Far away at Rhodes, near the south-west corner of Asia Minor, were established the

famous Knights of St. John. The Knights were a body of men who loved above all to face death and danger; the bold adventurous spirits who to-day seek out the Poles or fly the Atlantic, in those days joined the Knights of St. John; and of the famous company were also those whom dishonour or disgrace had overtaken, who wished to bury the past beneath a monument of great deeds of daring. Of such were the Knights of St. John. Now these Knights had been the outpost of Christendom in infidel waters. Their galleys had harried the coasts of Egypt and Syria, a perpetual danger to Turkish commerce, a force watchful for every new infidel move.

But the rivalry of Charles and Francis, the breaking up of Christendom into hostile groups, political and religious, gave the Turk his chance. And he was not slow to use it. 'A house divided against itself cannot stand': the house of Christendom began to tremble beneath the blows of the infidel. The Turk had two lines of attack, up the Danube and through the Mediterranean. We have seen him in 1532 almost at the gates of Vienna. His progress in the Mediterranean had been as great.

In 1522 Sultan Solyman after a six months' siege captured Rhodes. Rhodes having fallen, Charles established the Knights at Tripoli and Malta. The western Mediterranean should at least be safe. In the reign of Charles's grand-





father Ferdinand, Cardinal Ximenez had conquered large tracts of North Africa for Spain. Cardinal Ximenez had wished to conquer and convert the whole of North Africa. But Ferdinand was content with establishing along the coast a series of military posts from Melilla in the West to Tripoli in the East. With the Spaniards holding these posts along the North African coast, and with the narrow channel between Sicily and Africa guarded by the Knights of St. John at Malta and Tunis, how came it that by the year 1532 infidel ships were harrying Spain and Italy?

The Spanish military posts on the African coasts were weak, isolated, far apart: they were often dependant even for water on the home country. Inland the country was hostile. Barbarossa, a Christian renegade who ruled the state of Algiers, had acknowledged the suzerainty of the Turk, and with Turkish aid had defeated in 1518 a Spanish naval force that had attempted to capture the city of Algiers. Barbarossa was strong, and while Charles and Francis were busy fighting he grew stronger. The scattered Spanish ports were useless to Christendom, almost negligible as a source of danger to Barbarossa. Barbarossa's next move was to conquer the adjoining native state of Tunis. The native dynasty was weak; Barbarossa quickly captured the town of Tunis and extended his power far inland. This was in



1533. It was Barbarossa's ships that, setting forth from the strong state of Algiers and later from Tunis, were spreading terror along Christian shores. No wonder Charles's subjects in Naples and Sicily implored his aid, for in 1533 Barbarossa's dreaded squadrons had established their headquarters at Bizerta and Goletta. Sicilians gazing seawards from their southern shores could see the dreaded ships passing to and from their harbours just below the horizon.

Unless Charles wished the coasts of Spain, of Naples, and of Sicily to be swept bare of population, he must strike at Barbarossa and strike soon. This was why he did not lead his forces in pursuit of the Turkish army retreating down the Danube. The danger in the West was more pressing.

Charles reached Spain in 1533. At once he began the labour of preparing a great crusade. He had decided to conquer Tunis. He had not made up his mind to this without anxious thought, for he knew Francis was making ready for war; but he thought he had time to shoot his bolt against the infidel before he need face the Christian King. Events proved him right—he had just time enough and no more.

Never had Charles been so popular amongst his subjects. Never had Spain welcomed a great enterprise so joyfully, or followed great preparations so enthusiastically. At Barcelona Charles's fleet and forces assembled and were fitted out. At Genoa Andrea Doria fitted out the

Genoese ships and supervised the embarkation of German and Italian troops. Galleys from Sicily and southern Italy and even ocean-going ships from Portugal were making ready for the fray. It was to be a great crusade, led by the Emperor of Christendom. The rendezvous for all units of the great expedition was the port of Cagliari, on the south coast of Sardinia. When the day came—30th May 1535—for Charles and his fleet to sail from Barcelona, the excitement of the people knew no bounds; rich and poor, nobles and peasants became one in their eagerness; men, women, and children, carried away with enthusiasm, scrambled to board the ships. So Charles and his gallant fleet swept out of Barcelona on a great wave of popular goodwill. Spain was for a moment united in prayers and hopes and loyalty. And on board Charles's ship, above his head, waved the great banner of the crucified Christ. As Charles paced the deck his heart must have beat fast with an excitement deeper, more intense than any he had known as a child twenty years ago. He was now to fulfil his childhood's ambition.

When the Spanish, Genoese, Italian, and Portuguese ships had assembled at Cagliari the whole expedition weighed anchor, and sailing southwards put to shore at Carthage. The first objective was Goletta; Goletta captured, the troops would march on Tunis.

Goletta was a strong fortress, and it was

defended with unexpected stubbornness. The besieged made fierce and desperate sorties; the army of Christendom suffered considerable losses: but bravely the soldiers of the Cross stuck to their task, while over their heads the sky was hot as molten steel. At last Goletta was stormed, and with Goletta the whole infidel fleet of eighty-two ships fell into Charles's hands. The shores of Naples and Sicily were safe; at a single blow Charles had shorn the state of Tunis of its power of offence.

Charles was only nominally in command of the expedition. It was his first active campaign, and he had left to more experienced heads the actual generalship. On the fall of Goletta his generals and advisers decided to re-embark and return home: with the capture of the enemy ships the purpose of the expedition had been fulfilled, why then incur the hazards of a dangerous march on Tunis? So they argued, and at length Charles bowed to their experience. He was sorely disappointed; his blood was up; he was eager to add success to success. To the ardour of youth was joined in him the fervour of the religious crusader; but he was neither overbearing nor headstrong, and he gave way with fair grace.

In the end, however, his wishes were fulfilled. At the last moment it was decided to risk the march on Tunis.

And a risk it was, at which old heads might

well shake. Tunis was twelve miles distant from Goletta, but, twelve terrific, scorching miles. The army had rations for five days only. They had no transport. Guns and baggage must be dragged by hand over the blazing ground beneath a blazing sun. The track lay between glittering lagoons on the left and groves of olives on the right, and was but a thousand yards wide. Four miles from Tunis, and eight from Goletta, were the only fresh-water wells.

The army, divided into advance guard and rear guard with the baggage in the centre, started on the hazardous march. And Barbarossa moved out from Tunis into the olive groves. Barbarossa's aim was to surround Charles's right flank and rear. Had he succeeded in bringing Charles's army to a standstill it must have perished of thirst and famine. But Barbarossa's horsemen could not stand up to the well-disciplined fire of the Spaniards. They made two attacks. After the first they feigned flight. But the Christian army did not pursue: it marched steadily on. The second attack, on Charles's rear, met with hails of bullets that sent the attackers flying in real earnest. The Christian army was almost mad with thirst by the time it reached the wells. Many of the poor fellows, unable to wait their turn, pressed forward, ripped off their shirts, soaked them in the trampled mud at the well's brink, and sucked them dry. Many,



when the time came to rejoin the ranks and push on, could not face the prospect of the scorching waterless miles. They stayed by the wells, courting certain death at the hands of the enemy.

When Barbarossa's horsemen were put to flight they galloped back to Tunis. But Barbarossa found he could not enter his fortress. In his absence the Christian slaves at Tunis had risen in revolt. They held out stubbornly against him until the arrival of Charles. And Tunis was easily captured.

Charles was in great spirits. He was suffering from gout, but he did not mind. He wrote that God had sent him a fine plaster for all his maladies. He restored Tunis to its native king whom Barbarossa had dispossessed, but he kept Goletta as a military outpost, and Bona, which Andrea Doria had captured while the army was at Tunis.

Charles was anxious to proceed to the attack of Algiers whither Barbarossa had retreated, but he soon saw that such an attempt would be courting certain disaster. His troops were suffering from disease and heat: the season was far advanced, and winter with its dangerous storms might wreck his ships. So the expedition dispersed, and Charles returned, content with his triumphs. He had struck vigorously and shrewdly at Turkish power in the western Mediterranean, and all southern Europe welcomed him as their saviour.



## CHAPTER X

### FALSE 'BROTHER' AND FAITHFUL SISTER

1535-1540

ON his return from Tunis Charles visited for the first and only time his kingdom of Sicily. The Sicilians gave him an enthusiastic welcome; he was their saviour, for had he not at Goletta captured the ships of death that had for so long swept their shores? Charles made a triumphant progress through the island.

And then, just before he left, across the clear sky of these sunny days came, like a heavy thundercloud, the news that the Duke of Milan was dead.

Charles knew very well what the tidings foreboded. To the Duke of Milan he had given a niece in marriage; they had no heir; the Duke was dead; the succession vacant. Francis could no more resist snatching at Milan than a dog at a meaty bone dangled before its nose. Charles knew that Francis had been preparing for war for the last three years: knew that he had now even concluded an alliance with the Turk. Charles had dreaded this war. Now he realized it must come, and at once. The death of Milan's

Duke was the spark that would light the fire of war.

In vain Charles made a bid for peace, proposing that Francis's third son should marry the widowed Duchess of Milan, and become the new Duke. Agreement was impossible. Francis meant Milan to pass to the Kings of France, and he meant war with Charles. Charles meanwhile had crossed the Straits of Messina; at Rome he heard that Francis had taken a step that made war inevitable. Francis's blow was sudden and unexpected. He had attacked not Milan but the territory of Savoy-Piedmont. Easily he conquered Savoy; then he crossed the Alps, captured Turin and the greater part of Piedmont. In the presence of the Pope and the cardinals Charles for once lost his temper: he cursed Francis up and down for his treacherous and unprovoked attack on Savoy-Piedmont. Charles knew that for the sake of his reputation he must take up arms at once on behalf of the Duke of Savoy, who was the husband of a sister of the Empress Isabella.

So Charles left Rome to try once more to settle accounts with his persistent enemy. Rome might well have scowled at the man whose brigand army had burned and pillaged her. There were some, indeed, who had put up their shutters when Charles arrived and refused to look upon him. But the frankness, the courage, the sincerity of the young Emperor conquered the

hearts of the majority of Romans. Had he not captured Tunis and the dread fleet of Barbarossa? And on his arrival did he not kneel before the Pope in front of the door of the great cathedral of St. Peter, and follow him to the sacred altar to offer thanksgiving for the victory of the Cross? And did he not walk unarmed and unattended through the Roman streets and squares? Charles won the hearts of the Romans. And, in spite of his anger with Francis, he was in happy mood when he started on his northward journey. At the little city of Siena cries of "Welcome, welcome, Emperor Charles!" greeted him. He pulled up his horse and laughed and joked with the people: he bent and took a small boy from his nurse's arms and kissed him: he would not accept the keys of the city from the magistrates as was customary, for "they are in good hands," he said. He was happy and jolly and so was all Siena. But he must press on to sterner tasks. Northwards he marched through Florence, Pontremoli, Borgo San Domino, to Asti.

Charles took the field in the summer of 1536. He marched at the head of his army into Provence. He wanted to force a fight quickly, and then at once make peace. Then he would turn his strength once more against the infidel. But Francis had no intention of facing the Imperial army in a pitched battle. He knew a better trick than that.

He coolly withdrew his forces before Charles. Charles reached Aix without meeting any opposition. Francis knew what he was about: he had stripped the country bare as he retired, and Charles's army was half-starved and much weakened by having to send foraging parties far and wide into the country. His position at Aix became hopeless. To remain there meant starvation; he dared not lead a half-starved army farther into hostile country. Wisely he retreated. The year's fighting had ended in Francis's favour. And Charles returned to Spain.

War continued throughout the next year—a war of sieges and skirmishes that cost money but brought no decision. Early in 1538 Charles determined that peace must be made. Angry though he was with Francis, he could not bear to see time and money wasted on a Christian King when it might be devoted to war with the infidel. The rival Kings would not meet, but they sent their terms to the Pope and asked him to arrange a peace. In June a truce for ten years was arranged, each keeping what he had. Charles was certainly the loser, for the greater part of Savoy-Piedmont was in Francis's hands; and with Francis crouching at the north-west corner of Italy, the peace of Italy could never be safe.

And then, a month after the conclusion of the truce, the world rubbed its eyes and wondered



whether it were dreaming. The galley which was bearing Charles back to Spain collided with another galley in a fog. It was forced to put in to the little French harbour of Aigues Mortes. Francis was at Aigues Mortes. He boarded the Imperial galley, and King and Emperor met. For two hours they sat on the poop and talked like bosom friends. The next day Charles landed and dined with Francis. After dinner there was a dance, and Charles and Francis stood looking on, chatting and laughing. Francis escorted Charles back to his galley: before he left him he gave him a diamond ring as a token that now they were for ever fast friends and brothers. And Francis swore upon his honour that never again would he attack Charles; always he wanted to be his friend, he said, friend of his friends, and foe of his foes, because Charles was "the wisest of living Christian princes."

How happy was Charles! "In truth I am full of joy," he cried, "for now I hope that the fortunes of Christianity will go right well." And that was the dearest wish, the constant aim of honest Charles, the Champion of the Church.

Did Charles at this time, we may wonder, remember that other occasion after Pavia, when he and Francis had become brothers—and after? If he did, he banished the thought. He believed in Francis again—perhaps because he wanted so much to believe in him.



After the meeting Charles went on his way rejoicing. In Spain, through the winter of 1538-1539, he was making eager preparations to renew his attack on the infidel in the spring. But his hopes were dashed to the ground. Spring brought heavy sorrow, for in May his devoted wife, the Empress, died. As we have said, Charles fell in love with Isabella after his marriage. They had been devoted to one another. Her loss was the severest blow fate had yet dealt him.

But there were many in Europe who saw in Charles's loss their opportunity. Charles was only thirty-nine. The kings and princes of Europe at once began to scheme to marry daughter, niece, or sister to the sorrowing Emperor. Francis, incapable of understanding true love or sorrow, at once stepped into the breach with a proposal that Charles should marry his daughter Margaret. Charles replied abruptly: "We pray the King to renounce the project. . . . We have no intention of marrying again, and we are, moreover, too old for Madame Marguerite." No political gain could tempt Charles to marry again. The loss of Isabella was irreparable.

Charles might have found relief for his sorrow in a campaign against the infidel. But this was not to be. This time it was not Francis, nor the Pope, nor Germany that saved the infidel

—but the Netherlands. The offender was his birthplace, the city of Ghent.

Charles had not spent much time in the Netherlands during the last twenty years, partly because the Netherlands were remarkably loyal to him, and partly because he had left them in very capable hands. His Aunt Margaret had died in 1530, and Charles had then begged his sister Mary, the widowed Queen of Hungary, to act as Regent in her stead. Mary was the most capable of all Charles's brothers and sisters; and she loved Charles. She knew how difficult was the task that Charles had asked her to undertake, but she consented; and for nearly ten years she had applied herself with skill and devotion to her self-imposed duty.

Though Charles had not been much in the Netherlands, however far away he was, and however occupied, the land he first inherited was never far from his thoughts. By war or purchase he had added to the original provinces Friesland, Overijssel, Utrecht, and Tournai. The Netherlands were becoming geographically more compact. They were also growing more prosperous; they might grumble at his absence, but the great territories that kept him occupied elsewhere brought trade and riches to their ports. As King of Spain and ruler of vast dominions in South America, Charles did all he could to increase the flow of Spanish trade to the Netherlands:

as Emperor he encouraged commerce on the Rhine which took the sea at Netherlands ports. His influence in Portugal diverted much trade to the Netherlands. Antwerp indeed had already become one of the greatest commercial cities of the world.

The Netherlands were grateful to Charles. Though his constant wars with France had lost them much of their customary French trade, Charles had more than balanced this loss. The Netherlands had nothing to gain from these French wars: they were wars against the Emperor and the King of Spain, who happened to be their ruler. But they took the rough with the smooth, and their loyal response to his demands for men and money is the measure of their gratitude to him for his efforts on their behalf.

From 1521 onwards they had supported him against Francis loyally. But the war with Francis that began in 1536 was the direct cause of the revolt of Ghent which now prevented Charles from attacking the infidel. In 1537 French armies had invaded Artois, and Mary to meet the danger had called upon the provinces for a grant of money to support 30,000 men for six months. Though the quarrel with France was none of their seeking or making, the provinces responded loyally—with the exception of Ghent. From refusal of men or money Ghent proceeded to active revolt. The citizens rebelled: they rose

against the city magistrates; there was bloody street fighting; the rebels were successful, and with vague dreams of independence before their eyes they assumed control of their city. Mary could do nothing. There was danger of the revolt spreading. She wrote to her brother that he must come and show that he was ruler indeed, or let Flanders break away and rule itself as it pleased.

Charles could not refuse his sister's summons. Sadly he put away his cherished ambition to fight the infidel. He sent a messenger to Ghent saying that he was coming. The rebellious city only laughed, for it thought that Francis and the Turk and the Lutherans in Germany would keep Charles busy; and of Mary they were not afraid. But never was Ghent more mistaken.

Thanks to his new friendship with Francis, Charles could arrange to pass through France, instead of undertaking the longer journey by sea with its chances of delay by storms and contrary winds. He sped through France. Mary came to meet him at Valenciennes on 21st January 1540. A deputation from Ghent also came: he told the deputies that his anger with the city, the city of his birth, was great, and he had set aside all his plans and had come with all speed, determined to make an example of the rebels.

At Charles's approach the rebel city was ter-



rified. It offered no resistance. Charles entered on 14th February. Wishing to overawe the city he made a great show of his entry. With him was his brother King Ferdinand, his sister Queen Mary, his niece the Duchess of Milan, innumerable princes, bishops, ambassadors, all the great Netherlands nobles, troops of Netherlands horse, and 3,000 German landsnechts. Nine of the leaders of the revolt were at once executed. Then on 29th April Charles ordered the doors of his palace to be thrown open and he took his seat on his throne. All might see and hear what then happened. And all did.

Before Charles on his throne the aldermen and guildmasters of the town were led, and upon them he passed judgment. He declared Ghent guilty of disloyalty, disobedience, sedition, rebellion, and high treason; all her rights and privileges were thereby forfeited. She must pay her share of the subsidy of 1537, and in addition an indemnity of 150,000 gulden and a yearly fine of 6,000 gulden. On the third day of May the magistrates with thirty of the chief citizens must appear before him bareheaded, in black robes, and girt with cords; 400 members of the various guilds must also appear in their shirts with ropes round their necks and pray Emperor and Queen for mercy.

On the appointed day the terrible procession filed before the Emperor, in abject humiliation.



Charles appeared stern, harsh, and unforgiving. Was he hesitating whether or not to spare them? Then Mary prayed him to forgive them and the city; for it was after all the city of his birth. And Charles listened to Mary. And he spared the suppliants and forgave the city.

Charles had shown no trace of cruelty. He was just, as always. He executed nine only of the rebels—a number small indeed compared with the deaths that the rebels had inflicted in their revolt. Later he halved the fine and indemnity. His fairness and moderation made Mary's task of government much easier for the future. The Netherlands had learned that however far away Charles was, he was their lord, and he had his eye upon them.

## CHAPTER XI

### A DISASTROUS YEAR

1541

**I**N January 1541 Charles entered Germany again. And it was quite time too. He had been away nine years. Once before he had been away for nine years, and he had paid the penalty; for 'when the cat's away the mice will play.' During the nine years 1521-1530 Lutheranism, in Charles's absence, had rooted itself deeply in German soil, and Charles in 1530 had been unable to uproot it: he had to leave it, a hardy, unwanted flower, in his Catholic German garden, for he had business against the Turk to attend to. But before he left he took measures to prevent (as he hoped) this flower from spreading. Now in 1541, after another nine years' absence, Charles entered Germany again, only to find, of course, that Lutheranism had spread and taken deeper root. We cannot be surprised: no gardener on returning from nine years' absence would be surprised to find his garden overrun with such a hardy, vigorous flower. Charles was not surprised; he had had constant reports from Germany during all these years; he knew what his absence meant, but he believed that his first duty was to fight the Turk; he had fought him and captured Tunis; then Francis

had kept him busy, and after Francis, his native city of Ghent. He could not be everywhere at the same time.

Now the Lutherans were not fools: their princes were as cunning as their preachers were fervent; they knew that Charles could not be everywhere at the same time; they knew that his ambition was to fight the infidel rather than themselves; they knew that the Catholic King Francis, his rival, would keep him busy; they knew that the Pope, their enemy, and the man who above all should have helped Charles, was selfish and treacherous and friendly with Francis. And so they very wisely made hay while the sun shone. They felt quite safe; indeed, they could afford to laugh at Charles, for soon after he had left them in 1533, Pope Clement VII had gone to Marseilles to meet Francis, and later had given his cousin Catharine to Francis's second son in marriage. Pope and Francis, thick as thieves—excellent! True, Clement died soon after, but his successor, Paul III, was just as selfish and as favourable to France. So while Charles was fighting the infidel at Tunis, Lutheranism was spreading in Germany; and Francis extended one encouraging hand to the Lutherans and the other to the Turks. While Charles was leading the army of the Cross against the Crescent, the Pope was aiding and abetting Francis, the infidel's friend and the heretic's

accomplice! No wonder the Lutherans felt safe. We cannot blame them for making the best of their opportunities: but it was bad luck for Charles to have such treacherous friends and foes.

When the Tunisian campaign was over the Lutherans did not worry: and they had no need to. Charles knew perfectly well that they were strengthening themselves in Germany, but he also knew that Francis was about to spring a war upon him. He could not tackle Francis and Germany at the same time, so he let Germany alone. And the Lutherans continued to do as they liked until the war with Francis was over in 1538. The news of the friendship of Francis and Charles at Aigues Mortes certainly alarmed them: if, indeed, Francis and Charles were friends, Charles would be able to turn upon them all his strength. Their day of reckoning was at hand! But Francis quickly banished their fears, explained that his profession of friendship was only a sham, and made alliances with them. They breathed again: all was well. Better than well, for quickly came the news of the revolt of Ghent. Good—that would keep Charles busy for a time.

And now the revolt of Ghent had been suppressed and Charles was amongst them again. Yes, he was amongst them again, but need they tremble? Was not Francis on their side? And



was not the Turk advancing again upon Hungary? Were not infidel ships, at the instigation of Francis, again spreading havoc along the coasts of Spain and Italy? And was not the Pope himself enemy of Charles and friend of Francis? Charles might be Emperor and Champion of the Church, but, beset by enemies as he was, he could not harm them much: they might almost snap their fingers at him.

The Catholics of Germany had long become disheartened. They saw the Pope, the head of their Church, in alliance with Francis, who was himself in alliance with Lutherans and Turks. Could any help be expected from such a man? Could any respect be paid to him? It is surprising that amongst the princes there were any Catholics left, for they felt their cause betrayed by the Holy Father, and the Church wealth and authority that Lutheranism promised them was a sore temptation. Honest German Catholics realized that it was no good looking to the Pope—Germany must settle her religious difficulties herself: they looked to an Imperial Convention at which Catholic and Lutheran might thrash out a religion satisfying to all.

And what were Charles's plans for Germany? As so often before—to preserve peace for the immediate future. And why? As so often before—because he saw war with Francis again looming ahead. Yes: again he had to cope with the



hostility of Francis: the friend at Aigues Mortes was a momentary dream: the real Francis was the false, persistent, dishonourable King whose ambassadors were at their old tricks intriguing against Charles at the Sultan's court, in Germany, in every state in Italy. But Charles wanted to finish the work he had begun at Tunis; he wanted to capture Algiers, the new headquarters of the infidel fleet. The revolt of Ghent had forced him to postpone the expedition. He thought now he would just have time to capture Algiers before Francis struck at him—but only if he could establish peace in Germany. Peace in Germany—that was essential; that was what he had come to Germany for.

Now Charles had by now very naturally about as much love and respect for the Pope as had the Lutherans; like other honest Catholics he was beginning to think that an Imperial Convention to settle Germany's religious difficulties was the best policy: an Imperial Convention was the alternative to a Council of the Church. Hitherto, since he could not uproot Lutheranism by force, he had aimed at postponing any permanent decision about Germany's religion until the Pope should summon a Council to consider the demands for reform. But he now began to see that the Pope would either never summon a Council, or if he did he would fill it with his own friends, who would not listen to demands

for reform. Very well, then, Germany and her Emperor must deal with the matter themselves, and either arrange something to which all Germany would agree, or else agree for ever to differ.

Accordingly a conference was summoned to meet at Regensburg in April 1541: and thither Charles went, eager but not too hopeful of success.

Charles had set himself a hopeless task. The conference was doomed to failure from the first, though it lasted nearly a month. And the failure was inevitable not because the Pope wanted it to fail—though he did: not because Francis wanted it to fail, and encouraged Lutheran and Catholic princes to make no concessions—though he did. The Turkish army advancing up the Danube in great force captured Buda Pesth—but this, of course, did not cause the failure of the conference. No, the conference failed because the German princes wanted it to fail. The princes, whether Lutheran or Catholic, were with few exceptions insincere in their religion. The last thing they wanted was religious unity and peace, because peace and unity would increase the power and authority of the Emperor, and consequently, they reasoned, decrease their own power. And they put their power before their religion. They saw in a Germany torn with religious strife, a good chance of obtaining their own complete independence of

the Emperor. And so it was that Lutheran and Catholic princes set to work to ensure the failure of the conference. There was not a pin to choose between them. And they found it easy work. Francis's agents were there to support them, though they needed no help, and to promise them aid against Charles; and behind Francis was the might of the Turk. The conduct of Catholic Bavaria is typical of the hostility of the German states to their Emperor, and of their disregard for religion: Catholic Bavaria was at one and the same time urging Charles to suppress Lutheranism by force, and intriguing with the Lutheran princes for a league against Charles under the presidency of the French King. Small wonder that the conference of Regensburg ended in failure.

No solution was arrived at; but it was agreed that within the space of eighteen months the religious demands of Germany should be laid before a Council, or failing that a National Synod; and meanwhile Charles guaranteed the Lutherans in the possession of their gains.

All that Charles could say when he left Germany was that he had avoided war. The patched-up peace gave him his opportunity to prepare his expedition to Algiers.

Times had changed indeed in Germany during the last twenty years. In 1521 Charles left Germany, flushed with his success at the

Diet of Worms, having, as he thought, extinguished Luther: he left Germany to make ready for his first war with the treacherous Francis: he left Germany full of youthful dreams of how he, the Church's Champion, would stamp out heresy, and lead the hosts of the Cross against the Crescent. In 1541 he left Germany, conscious of failure, having through the greed and selfishness of his fellow Catholics, been compelled to guarantee the safety of an immensely powerful Lutheran Church: he left Germany with the knowledge that war with Francis was again imminent—Francis the rival who had been fighting him openly or secretly through all those twenty years, the rival whom once he had had in his hands and had allowed to escape: but he left Germany still full of his youthful dream of leading the Christian hosts to victory against the Turks, a dream that had already at Tunis been realized. Now he hoped to realize it again. Twenty years have not weakened his sincerity, his perseverance, his fairness, his sense of duty: but they have developed the difficulties, the impossible complexities of his task.

Charles left Germany in July. No time was to be lost if Algiers was to be attacked that year, for the sudden fierce storms of winter in the Mediterranean would endanger his fleet. Charles decided that he must risk the storms. He had talked of and planned the expedition since 1539:



he was already being twitted with cowardice for ignoring the Turk: he could no longer allow the infidel ships to burn and pillage the southern shores of Spain and Italy. Time was precious: October came; soon the season of winter storms would be upon them. A fortnight would suffice to take Algiers. He urged forward the preparation: he chafed at every delay. At last he sailed with Doria's fleet from Spezia, and reached the African coast at Cape Metafez on 20th October. A Spanish division had already arrived, but it lay to the west of Algiers. The fleets experienced rough weather, and for three days were unable to join, but on the 23rd seven miles to the east of Algiers they met, and 20,000 troops were landed. The men had rations for three days only. On the 24th they advanced on Algiers, and after a brief skirmish with the enemy the Spaniards and Germans took possession of the high ground to the south of the city: the Italians guarded the shore where further troops and artillery were being disembarked.

A general attack was ordered for the next day, the 25th. But it was not to be. Charles had courted disaster by embarking on the expedition so late in the year. And disaster came upon him. On the night of the 24th a fierce storm sprang up. Torrents of icy rain swept down upon the exposed army. Tents were blown down, ammunition drenched. The enemy seized their chance



and made a sortie from the town. The Spaniards, though chilled and damped in body, were still of high courage, and they easily beat back the attack. But not so the Italians: their task was harder: the tempest had wrought terrible confusion amongst the disembarking troops: the enemy turned confusion into chaos, and inflicted great losses. Throughout the next day the storm raged. Charles brought all his forces down to the shore to the aid of the Italians, and there he was forced to look on while his ships were dashed and wrecked upon the rocks. On the 26th Andrea Doria made off with the battered remnants of his fleet for the shelter of Cape Metafez, and Charles and the troops were forced to follow him. They struggled along the coast. It was a terrible march. Rations were by now exhausted; the troops had to kill and eat some of their horses. The enemy harassed them on all sides. But Charles was no coward: he rallied his forces, and his cheerfulness, his calmness, and his courage probably averted complete disaster. The army reached Cape Metafez: the storm ceased, and they embarked. They had to slaughter the horses they had not eaten, because there was no room for them in the diminished fleet.

Patched-up peace in Germany; disaster at Algiers. It was a sorry year for Charles. His patience and sincerity, his courage and endurance were ill rewarded.

## CHAPTER XII

### WESTWARD HO!

1492-1555

THE year 1542 was the last that Charles spent in Spain as King. We have followed him in war and peace in the Netherlands and Italy, in Germany and Africa; but we must remember that Spain has up till now always been his headquarters. Spain has not figured much in these pages only because his troubles there were slight after the first few years of his reign. Let us now, before he leaves, see what he achieved in Spain.

Though the disaster at Algiers was costly and a bitter disappointment to him, it did not tumble him from his position as the greatest monarch in Europe. And it was Spain that supported him in that position. Charles did much to fashion Spain's greatness, but the real source of it was the daring and adventurous spirit of the Spaniards themselves.

Charles's first years in Spain had been full of trouble: and soon after his departure for Germany the cities had broken into open revolt. The nobles dealt sternly with the cities, drawing the hostility of the citizens from the young King upon themselves; and when Charles returned

with foreign troops and guns, the sight of the *Great Devil* and the other guns put an end to further rebellious thoughts. There was no more trouble. The cities remained loyal if sometimes frankly critical. Equally loyal were the proud nobles whom Charles chiefly feared; they were indeed wise enough to be content with Charles.

Charles was respected, but he was never popular. Spain grumbled at his costly wars, and his frequent absences. Though Spain was called upon to pay a great part of the bill for the wars, she had little cause for complaint: far less, for instance, than the Netherlands. For Charles's wars were Spanish wars: wars forced upon him by France, Spain's hereditary enemy; had Francis ever decisively defeated Charles he would have grabbed first Naples and Navarre, both Spanish possessions; and proud Spain would have cried loud enough then! Charles, indeed, had some excuse for complaining at the niggardly grants of the Cortes in aid of wars that were waged in the defence of Spain; and it says much for his loyalty to Spain that he never sought to become a tyrant but remained dependent on the Cortes, whom he constantly summoned, for the money to support his wars. To the end of his reign in Spain, as in Germany and the Netherlands, he was a constitutional monarch.

A great and proud people, and, in his way, a

great and proud King! This was indeed the hey-day of Spanish power. The very complaints of the Spaniards show their vitality, their pride, their spirit. And Charles on his side, it must be admitted, helped much to raise Spain to the foremost position in Europe. He and his ministers were the very centre of the whirlpool of European diplomacy. The King of Spain, his acts, his thoughts, his plans were matters of the first importance in every court in Europe. Spanish infantry, trained by his generals as never troops had been trained, were the admiration and the terror of Europe; drilled on the plains of Italy, they fought in Italy, in France, in Germany, in the Netherlands, and their disciplined courage, their unconquerable spirit spread the glory of Spain wherever they went. Charles, whenever he was with them, though no great general, set them a fine example of courage and grit. To Charles also is largely due the continued purity of the Spanish Church: he was very careful in his selection of Spanish bishops; the corruption of the Church at Rome did not spread to Spain; and the Spanish bishops, though in vain, joined later with the Lutherans in their demands for reform at the Council of Trent.

Charles did not inspire Spain; he guided, controlled, and sometimes restrained her abundant energies wisely and conscientiously; his wise



restraining hand was felt in particular many thousands of miles away across the Atlantic. Yes: his influence, paramount in Europe, was felt also by millions of the brown peoples who dwelt in the tropic forests and bleak plateaux of Central and South America. Let us leave Europe, and visit the Spanish Empire across the seas.

We will start from Seville. A prosperous port is Seville. The masts of galleons rise like a forest from the quiet harbour waters: galleons rock side by side, a noble fleet, and above them gulls circle screaming in the sun, and across their decks barefooted sailors hurry to and fro stowing the cargo. Woollen goods, hides and horses, oil and wine, are packed away for shipment to the conquerors and the native populations across the seas. At last all is ready: sails are set, anchors weighed, and the whole fleet glides out into the Atlantic. The fleet is really two fleets, but for safety—for there are many pirates on the high seas, a goodly number of them English—the two fleets cross the Atlantic together; on the other side of the ocean they part, one turning southwards for South America, the other pursuing its way to Central America. Months later Seville welcomes the two fleets back: they arrive together, and the jetties are thronged as the galleons unload their cargo of gold and silver and precious stones, of *coca* and spices.

When Charles was born, in the year 1500,



Spain possessed but a few islands in the West Indies—the largest, Cuba; and these came into her hands through Columbus who, sailing under the Spanish flag, discovered the New World in 1492. In the year 1540 Spain possessed an Empire across the seas that was larger than the whole of Europe. In the space of forty years these vast territories, separated from Spain by perilous leagues of ocean, had been discovered and conquered by a mere handful of bold adventurous Spaniards. The story of these conquests is more strange and thrilling than any fairy tale. The plain facts are that a few hundred Spaniards sailed away thousands of miles from home across the unexplored ocean, and conquered in a few years territories ten times as great as Spain itself, and inhabited by millions who had never before seen a white man, and, we must remember, never before met with the awful death-dealing power of gunpowder.

While the boy Charles was paying his first visit to Spain, Hernando Cortes was conquering Mexico. Before Charles met Luther at Worms (1521) the great Empire of Mexico had been added to his dominions. Hernando Cortes had started from Cuba for the mainland of America with 110 sailors, 553 soldiers, 10 heavy guns, 4 lighter pieces, a good supply of ammunition, and 16 horses. A horse had never before been seen by the Indians, and horse and rider were re-

garded as one supernatural being—an object that filled them with the greatest terror. At the first landing of the Spaniards, the horsemen and still more the terrible flash and roar of the guns terrified the Indians, whose arms were stones flung from slings, arrows, darts and javelins, and swords. The rank and file of the Indians were clothed only in loin-cloths and paint, and their bodies were fearfully mangled and shattered by the balls of the guns. Horses and guns, indeed, played almost as great a part in the conquest of Mexico as the courage and adventurous spirit of the Spaniards.

Cortes burned his ships, when he reached the mainland, so that none of his little band should think of turning back: then he set out with his brave company on their adventurous march from Campoalla to Mexico, the capital of the great empire of Montezuma: the city whose wealth and beauty were rumoured to be fabulous: the city that lay beyond the mountains, cradled in the waters of Lake Chalco. Climbing upwards from the low-lying ground at the coast where fruit and flowers bloomed in tropic heat, and the air was heavy with intoxicating scents, and rainbow coloured birds and insects flashed in the sun, they reached the wild, bleak country of the uplands, where the air was cold and icy storms raged: they passed between Mount Popocatepetl ("the hill that smokes") and Mount Iztaccihuatl

("the white woman"), two of the highest mountains in America: with cunning and skill, with horses and guns, they met and defeated native armies of as many as 50,000 men, and at last they beheld, sleeping below them, the rich valley of Tenochtitlan; at their feet were forests of oak, of sycamore, and cedar: beyond lay yellow fields of maize, orchards, and blooming gardens: and then—the great Mexican lakes, their margins studded with towns and hamlets, and in their midst the beautiful city of Mexico with her white towers and pyramidal temples springing as it were from the very waters of the lakes. This city and the whole vast empire of Montezuma Cortes, with his men, his guns, and his horses, had conquered and added to the crown of Spain by the year 1520: the Indians acknowledged Charles as their King, and the greedy hands of the Spanish conquerors seized the vast wealth of gold and precious stones, wrought into beautiful shapes by Indian craftsmen during the long years before the white man from across the sea came so terribly to trouble their civilization. One-fifth of the precious metals was sent home to Charles: the remainder was kept by the conquerors themselves.

Twelve years later, in 1532, Francisco Pizarro, with less than 200 men, had set out to conquer Peru, the great empire of the Incas. He reached the island of Puna, rested there for a while

amidst the hostile natives, then crossed to the mainland, and from Tumbez started on his adventurous march to the city of Cazamalca, in the heart of the mountains: for in that city lay Atahualpa, the Emperor, encamped with a vast army. By cunning Pizarro gained possession of the person of Atahualpa, who promised as a ransom to fill the room in which he was imprisoned with gold to the height of nine feet. The room measured twenty-two feet by seventeen feet. The ransom was paid, accepted; and then Pizarro had Atahualpa killed. Pizarro and his companions marched on to the capital Cuzco, and became virtual Emperor. Peru and all its wealth passed into the hands of Spain and her adventurous sons. The conquest was complete by 1536.

North and south the daring Spaniards penetrated, to California and Florida, and to Chili. In 1541 Gonzalo Pizarro discovered the Amazon: near the junction of the Napo and the Coca he halted, and he and his men cut down trees from the forests and built themselves a brigantine, and sailed it on the waters; and the brigantine under Orellana sailed down the Amazon while her crew watched endless miles of strange, wild country come into view and pass away behind them like a dream picture, sometimes beautiful, sometimes dark with unknown terrors; till at length they reached the Atlantic coast. Another



expedition sailed up the river De la Plata and occupied Paraguay. Gold was the magnet that drew the Spanish conquerors through fearful hardships and untold dangers into the remotest fastnesses of these unknown territories, this distant, unexplored continent. Daring and adventurous they were, but greed smirched their good name, and tainted their courage with cruelty and dishonour.

But this is not the place to tell the story of the conquests: those who wish to learn more of Cortes and Pizarro and their companions, of their thrilling adventures, of their courage, their cruelty, their cunning, their greed, should read Prescott's great books on the conquest of Mexico and the conquest of Peru. We have learned here sufficient to see the bold, daring spirit of the Spaniards increasing the wealth and fame of Spain—though at a terrible cost to the natives: we can see now how it was that Spain became the greatest country in Europe: the same spirit that conquered a continent across the sea inspired the Spanish infantry that fought in Italy and Germany and France, and made them the terror of Europe; and it was the same spirit, too, that caused the proud Spaniards to complain against the young boy King and his foreign friends and ministers when he first came to Spain.

Charles never sailed from Seville across the Atlantic. But he took a keen interest in the



expeditions of his conquerors. He encouraged Cortes; he made all the arrangements for Pizarro; he personally sent out the expedition to the river De la Plata. Always the bold conquerors sought him out personally, assured of his interest and encouragement. But Charles's chief work was that of organizing the conquered territories: of seeing that they were properly ruled and cared for. And what a work this was! He had found the task of ruling his scattered European territories more than enough for one man: and across the Atlantic out of his reach were territories greater than all Europe, and teeming with a population totally unused to European customs and methods of life—and he was called upon to organize the government of these distant lands! It is to the lasting honour of Charles and his advisers that they faced their difficulties courageously, and ruled these lands very fairly to the best of their ability.

This is what happened when a new country, such as Mexico, Peru, Chili, was conquered. To each member of the band of conquerors were allotted so many native Indian families, who remained under their *cacique*, or native chief, but had to supply the white man with all sorts of goods each year. For example, in one place in Peru 500 Indian families had to supply each year to their white lord 180 sheep, 300 pieces of cotton, each sufficient for a dress, 1,000 bushels

of maize, 850 bushels of wheat, 1,000 fowls, 1,000 sacks, with cords to them, 60 baskets of coca, 100 cotton napkins, 30 swine, 40 skins of sea-wolves dressed, and 40 undressed, 3 tents, 8 tablecloths, 2,000 baskets of pepper, 9 house cloths, 15 Indians for domestic service of the white man, 8 to look after his garden, and 8 to look after his sheep and cattle. The Spanish adventurer, who may have been a pauper at home, considered work beneath his dignity, and found himself practically lord and master of some hundreds of Indians, and an annual income of goods that were worth a fortune. And alas! he was not content with this: he treated his Indians like dirt, and wherever he could he made them his slaves.

What with the enormous death roll in battle, what with disease—smallpox and diphtheria—what with the terrible hardships they had to undergo in the service of their conquerors, the native Indian population was rapidly being exterminated. During the sixty years from the first coming of the Spaniards, probably no less than twelve million Indians were destroyed from these various causes. But Charles was alive to this awful destruction of human life. He and a powerful and noble set of ministers in Spain were deeply concerned, and did their utmost to help and preserve the Indians. Las Casas, a bishop of the Church, was chiefly responsible

for this care for the Indians. "In his habits," we are told, "Las Casas lived as a simple monk, his clothes humble, and sometimes torn and patched. He never wore a linen shirt, nor slept but in sheets of coarse serge with a blanket for coverlet. He ate no meat." This good man and great priest spent his life in the cause of the Indians. Twelve times he crossed the Atlantic. He groaned with horror at the sufferings of the Indians: he looked upon them as children, to be gathered into the fold of the Church. A Christian could not be a slave, therefore there must be no slavery amongst their Indians. They must be given as much freedom as possible: the demands of the conquerors must be diminished. He denied the right of the conquerors to claim personal service from the Indians. Las Casas, and the priests who followed upon the heels of the conquerors to gather in the new flocks to the Church, were hated by the conquerors. The conquerors said the Indians would revolt unless they were harshly kept down: the conquerors, indeed, meant to fill their pockets as full and as fast as they could—regardless of anybody and anything.

Charles had to decide between Las Casas and the conquerors. All his sympathies were with Las Casas: yet he recognized that the conquerors deserved great rewards for their daring, and that there was a danger that they would throw off the

rule of Spain and become independent unless they were treated sympathetically. Charles obeyed his own inclinations and the wishes of Las Casas. He made laws forbidding not only slavery, but any sort of personal service amongst the Indians, and he sent out wise and able governors and bishops to see that the laws were enforced. The conquerors had no right to complain for they had amassed huge fortunes, and Charles was only putting a brake on their greed and cruelty.

The laws of Charles for the colonies regarded the Indians as children, and the utmost was done to ensure their health and happiness. Here are the actual words of one of the laws, which shows how Charles cared for the Indians: "As the country where *coca* is grown is humid and subject to rain, and the Indians in their work generally get wet and then fall ill from not changing their wet clothes, we command that no Indian shall commence working that land without being provided with a change of clothes. And the Master of the *coca* plantation must take especial care that this be done, under a penalty of paying twenty baskets of *coca* for each time that he may be found to bring any Indians to their work without complying with the regulations herein set forth."

Thanks to the persistence of Las Casas, and the care of Charles, by the end of Charles's



reign all the vast Spanish conquests in America obeyed Charles's laws, and the rule of Spain was firmly established both over the conquerors and over the Indians. But there is one sad blot on the wisdom and kindness of Charles and Las Casas. They forbade slavery amongst the Indians, but they allowed negro slavery. Owing to the enormous loss of life amongst the Indians there was a shortage of labour in America, and Charles and Las Casas allowed and encouraged the importation of negro slaves from Portuguese Africa. Thus the conquerors were pacified, and the Indians cared for, at the expense of African negroes. The conquerors bought negro slaves from the Portuguese, who shipped them across the Atlantic, herded like cattle in the dark and filthy holds of the slave ships; and the sufferings of these poor negroes at the hands of their masters on the ships were horrible beyond description.

The Spanish colonies brought Spain prosperity as well as fame and glory. Towards the end of his reign Charles, who took one-fifth of all the precious metals mined or discovered in America, received annually about three million pounds. In these days that does not seem much, but in Charles's day it was a vast sum. Moreover, the colonies, rich as they were, bought quantities of Spanish produce—wool, horses, hides, oil, and wine—and thus farming in Spain became



a very profitable business. The governors of the colonies forced Spanish goods on the natives whether they wanted them or not. Thus the manufacture of silk and cloth in Spain increased greatly, and Spain for a time became a manufacturing country, that her goods might be bought by unwilling natives.

Spain indeed was proud and prosperous. The sight of the great American fleets sailing out of Seville might well stir Spanish hearts, and make them rejoice that they were Spanish. Spain had much to be proud of; there must be elements of greatness in a nation that could breed men like the conquerors of America, men like those who made the Spanish army the terror and admiration of Europe. But these men had their faults; they joined the army, or they sailed to America partly because they despised honest work. They were too proud to work; and this pride and the consequent drainage of her vigorous youth to America and the battlefields of Europe in later years helped to cause Spain's downfall. And they were cruel, as proud men who despise all other races often are; Charles worked earnestly to check their cruelty in America, and it says much for him and for them that they were loyal to him.

PART III  
1542-1558

CHAPTER XIII  
AT THE WALLS OF PARIS

1542-1544

**F**RANCIS crowed like a cock on a dunghill at Charles's Algerian disaster: to embolden Charles's enemies he spread exaggerated rumours of his losses: The ambitious Emperor's strength is broken! Come, Princes of Germany and rulers of Italy, now is the time to rid yourselves of his authority! Up and at him now! Hit him and hit hard while he's down!

Francis at once attacked Charles. 'Hit a man when he's down'—that was Francis's policy: and he struck without warning, without declaring war officially. His conduct was doubly dishonourable, for the Algerian disaster that had weakened Charles was not the result of any selfish, greedy ambition of Charles as ruler of Spain, Italy, or Germany: the Algerian disaster was not a Spanish nor an Italian nor a German disaster, but a Christian disaster: Charles had spent time, treasure, strength for Christendom. The Most Christian King Francis, had he been worthy of his title, would have aided Charles;

instead he rejoiced at his failure, and made use of it at once for his own ends.

But this is not the worst of Francis's dishonour. In the year 1542 he threw caution and scruples to the winds, and for the first time proclaimed openly his alliance with the Turk—with results that we shall soon see.

The war with Francis upon which Charles was now engaged is noteworthy for three reasons. Firstly, because it was primarily a Franco-German war; hitherto the wars with Francis had been Italo-German wars, any fighting that occurred in Germany, the Netherlands, or Spain being minor episodes; the Italian wars ended in 1529, and the settlement of Italy that Charles completed in 1533 was never seriously disturbed. Secondly, this was Charles's last war with Francis, though not with France: death was soon to lay by the heels the treacherous rival whom he had fatally allowed to escape from his hands. And thirdly, in the latter part of this his last war with Francis, as in his first war with him, Charles had Henry VIII of England as his ally.

The events of 1542 quickly showed that this was to be a German war. More: they showed Charles that the very existence of Catholicism and of his own power in Germany was at stake.

Francis invaded Roussillon, but the Spaniards drove him back ignominiously into France. Meanwhile, he had dispatched an army into the

Netherlands. Artois and Flanders were invaded, Luxemburg conquered. The Duke of Cleves, a Lutheran prince, and subject of the Empire, who had conquered Guelders and Zutphen, and long been a thorn in Charles's side, joined with the French and swept up to the very walls of Antwerp. But Antwerp held out, and by the end of the year Francis had lost all that he had gained, and much money besides.

So far so good; but while this fighting had been proceeding in the Netherlands and Spain, an event of great significance had occurred in Germany. In 1541 Charles had found the Lutherans too strong, the Catholics too selfish, the Pope too hostile, Francis too threatening, and time too short to accomplish anything for the Church in Germany. Anxious to be off to Algiers, he had been content to leave the Lutherans in peace, in order not to stir up trouble. The Lutherans were happy to see Charles depart to distant Algiers. Then came news of the disaster: came rumours, carefully spread by Francis, of his appalling losses: came reports even that Charles was drowned. Lutheranism spread and grew at the touch of these rumours, as flowers grow in spring sunshine. The Lutherans learned later that Charles had not been drowned, but they felt certain that his power had been crippled, and that Francis would soon give him the final blow. Luther-



anism waxed strong. In 1542 practically the only Catholic princes were the rulers of Austria (Ferdinand, Charles's brother), of Bavaria, and Duke Henry of Brunswick. The Lutheran Duke of Cleves was actually and successfully waging war upon Charles with the aid of the French.

The action of the Duke of Cleves was a serious matter for Charles: was he the herald of a general revolt of the German princes in concert with Francis? Then in 1542 Charles heard ominous news from Germany: the Lutheran champions, Philip of Hesse and John Frederick of Saxony, had joined together and expelled the Catholic Duke Henry of Brunswick from his Duchy. It looked as if the Lutheran princes were all leagued in secret—Cleves, Philip, John Frederick, and the others—and were all acting, as Cleves certainly was, in conjunction with Francis. If that were so, his own cause and the cause of German Roman Catholicism were as good as lost; he could not, single-handed, fight the powerful and disgraceful combination of Francis, and his friend the Pope, Lutheran Germany, and the Turk, whose armies were advancing on Vienna.

Aged and wearied with anxiety, suffering in health from the hardships and exposure at Algiers, Charles was miserably depressed. His hair and beard were fast turning white: his face was lean and haggard. But he was still "fast



in his deternynacion"; that heavy jaw was set.

Charles's worst fears were not fulfilled. Matters in Germany were not so bad as they seemed. He was saved by his enemies. Francis and the Pope, by their dishonourable conduct, drove the Lutherans over to his side, and gave him for the first and last time the strength of a united Germany to fight for him. For the Lutherans presently realized that the Pope was Charles's enemy as well as theirs: how could they fight against Charles for Francis, and therefore for their arch-enemy the Pope, who was Francis's friend? And for the first time they saw Francis as he really was, greedy, unscrupulous, a false friend, stained with dishonour.

Early in 1543 Charles sailed from Spain to Genoa on his way to the Netherlands. He was only just in time. A week later an infidel fleet of 110 galleys with 14,000 troops on board had, at the invitation of Francis, joined the French fleet in the western Mediterranean; and French and Turk were masters of the sea between Italy and Spain. Charles was on his way to strike at Cleves: there in the Netherlands his sister Mary had implored his aid: throughout 1542 hers had been a hard task, confronted as she was with the combined armies of the French and the rebel Duke of Cleves. She had begged her brother to leave Spain at the earliest moment

in 1543, for she knew what was afoot between Turk and French: she knew that the Turko-French fleet might cut him off, and then the Netherlands must surely fall. Her anxiety was intense, and intense was her relief when she heard that Charles had reached Genoa, and was on his way north to her aid. Had the infidel fleet arrived a week earlier the history of the Netherlands might have been very different.

While Charles was marching northwards Francis was invading Hainault, and the Franco-Turkish fleet had laid siege to Nice. The Pope welcomed the Turkish ships in Papal ports and sold them supplies; and the French looked on while the Turks captured Christians and sold them as slaves. The Lutherans shuddered with disgust. They had not turned a hair in past years when they knew that Francis and the Turk were secretly allied: they had indeed accepted Francis's aid and thus indirectly Turkish aid. But this was different—this open alliance of Christian King and Turk, this callous invitation of the Turk to the northern shores of the Mediterranean, this brutal indifference which watched Christians captured and sold into slavery. Charles after all had spent time and treasure unselfishly in fighting the Turk, the common enemy of Lutheran and Catholic: tales of his calmness, his courage, his cheerfulness in the Algerian disaster had reached their ears. What a difference

between the two monarchs! Charles was something of a hero; beside him Francis was a villain. But the Lutherans had more to learn about Francis yet.

To meet the combination of Solyman, Francis, and the Pope, Charles felt he was justified in making concessions to the Lutherans to obtain their aid, or rather to prevent them from coming to the aid of the Duke of Cleves. He promised them nothing permanent, but he promised not to interfere with them in any way for the time being. Philip of Hesse, the most dangerous of Lutheran princes, he dazzled with the prospect of the command of the Imperial forces against the Turk: and in return for this vague hint Philip promised not to aid the Duke of Cleves. The time for action had now come, and Charles was eager for the fray. With Lutheran Germany quiet, even friendly, he breathed again. His health improved: he shook off his weariness. He was always at his best when the call to action came. He acted swiftly and skilfully. His brother needed troops to meet Solyman's advancing force. Charles sent just sufficient to check Solyman, but no more. Then with all his might he hurled himself upon the rebel Duke of Cleves. It was believed that the Duke's town of Duren was impregnable: it yielded to the fierce assault of the Spaniards after three hours. And in a fortnight the Duke surrendered.

Again the Lutherans had cause to compare Charles and Francis. Francis, although he was the Duke's ally, had not raised a finger to help him in his hour of need: the Lutherans realized how worthless was Francis's friendship. And they might well have said to themselves, 'Better a just enemy than a false friend,' for Charles was merciful in the hour of victory. He allowed the Duke to retain his hereditary state of Cleves, taking from him only Guelders and Zutphen.

Meanwhile the French had again, as in 1542, overrun Luxemburg, and the Franco-Turkish fleet had burned Nice to the ground. But these were incidents of slight importance. The successful fortnight's war against Cleves had vast consequences. It settled the mind of the German Lutherans, already disposed to help Charles, definitely in Charles's favour. They had all the winter of 1543-1544 to think things over: they could only come to one conclusion. To refuse Charles help, or to fight him, was to aid Francis, the Pope, and the Turk: better fight for Charles than help their natural enemies—Pope and Turk. A Lutheran priest here and there might mock at Charles because he spent hours daily on his knees at prayer: but most Lutherans preferred to curse Francis, for was it not his fault that the Turks had set up a market at Toulon for the sale of Christian slaves captured at Nice? And of the Emperor's courage there could be no doubt. He



had behaved gallantly at Algiers; he had shown overwhelming vigour in the war of Cleves.

Early in 1544 a Diet was summoned to Speyer. It was at once evident that Charles had all Germany behind him. The war with Francis was recognized as a national German war. For the first time for years the two champion Lutheran princes, Philip and John Frederick, appeared at the Diet. Charles, always courteous, walked half way down the hall, cap in hand, to meet them. A touch of humour followed. John Frederick was stout, and in falling on one knee before the Emperor, as was the custom, he overbalanced and rolled over on the floor. He picked himself up and roared with laughter. Charles, perhaps out of consideration for him, maintained a grave face. At the Diet Charles promised that there should be a free and general Church Council held in Germany, and that in preparation for it he would hold a diet at which the whole question of religion should be discussed, and if possible, of course, settled. Meanwhile he would not interfere with the Lutherans. In return Charles was granted money and troops for the war with Francis.

Charles left Speyer at the beginning of July. The campaign of 1544 had already begun: the Imperial forces had recaptured Luxemburg: moreover, Henry VIII was now in alliance with Charles, and an English army had landed at



Calais. It had been arranged that the English and Imperial armies should march straight on Paris. Charles joined his generals at the siege of Saint Dizier. Winter and inaction had again brought him ill health. He was tired and far from well when he quitted Speyer, but as always he quickly recovered health and spirits now that the time had come for action. At Saint Dizier he exposed himself almost rashly in the trenches. The town did not fall till the middle of August: immediately on its surrender Charles led his army straight for Paris. By the middle of September the citizens of Paris were in flight, for his cavalry were galloping beneath the walls of the capital.

And Henry VIII? He had sat down stubbornly before Boulogne and refused to budge. Charles had been afraid this might happen if Henry came to France in person: indeed he had, somewhat tactlessly, hinted at the dangers of an active campaign for a monarch of such noble corpulence. Henry had replied with a rude remark about Charles's gout. Henry's campaign was a quiet and comfortable one: he simply sat down before Boulogne and laid siege to it. The fact of the matter was that the aims of Charles and Henry were quite different. Charles, as ever, wanted a quick victory that would cripple France and allow him to devote himself untroubled to Germany and the Turk: Henry VIII hoped to add French territory to his kingdom.

Charles saw that it was hopeless to expect active aid from Henry. Moreover, he realized that though his cavalry were at the gates of Paris, his position was full of danger. He had neither met nor defeated the main French army: his own army was a bad one, consisting largely of undisciplined German landsnechts. He had been warned from Spain not to expect further supplies. He knew that the Pope was waiting and watching, and at the first reverse would start active war in Italy. Charles therefore washed his hands of Henry and made peace. By the Treaty of Crépy the territories taken by either side since the truce of 1538 were restored; and a month or two later Charles finally agreed to grant Milan to Francis's second son, the Duke of Orleans, who was to marry Beatrice, the Infanta of Portugal, who was Charles's sister-in-law. The Duke of Orleans, however, died immediately afterwards, and thus it came about that Milan was saved for the Hapsburgs.

Charles was now able to turn his undivided attention to Germany, with the pleasant thought that, generous though the terms of peace had been for Francis, he had once again overcome his rival, and had made peace at the gates of Paris. Further, it was comforting to think that Francis was still saddled with the English war, and so would be unable to pay much attention to Germany.

## CHAPTER XIV

### GERMANY. VICTORY

1545-1547

CHARLES had obtained help from the Diet in 1544, not by surrendering to the Lutherans, but by making it clear to them that the Pope and Francis were as much their enemies as his; he had also promised a free and general Church Council to be held in Germany, and before that, and perhaps instead of it, a Diet to discuss the religious question. The Popes, hitherto backed by the strength of the ever-willing Francis, had refused to consider Charles's demand for a council: they had no mind for reform: reform would lighten their pockets. But now Francis had been defeated by the Emperor, and had his hands full with the English King: Paul III could no longer rely upon his aid. Charles is too strong for an enemy, Francis too weak for a friend, thought Paul III; I must become friends with Charles, and that means I must summon a council. Paul accordingly summoned a council to meet in 1545, and he summoned it to meet in Germany as requested, though he very astutely named as the place of meeting the city of Trent, which was close to the Italian border.

For twenty years settlement of Germany's religious question had been postponed by the Pope's refusal to summon a council. Time after time Charles had promised the Lutherans, and demanded from the Pope—a council. Time after time he had been forced to content himself with checking Lutheranism as best he could, pending—a council. Now at last the Pope had summoned a council. The day for the settlement of the German religious question was, it was clear, fast approaching. With the Pope friendly, and Francis beaten and occupied with Henry VIII, Charles for the first time could concentrate all his mind and strength on Germany. Moreover, once the council had met and published its decisions, the Lutherans would either bow to its will—or not. If they submitted—well and good; if they did not, Charles, as the Church's Champion, would be obliged to punish them. Charles hoped for peace, but he did not expect it. He prepared for war. Charles did not want war. Always he hated war, and would put it off if he could, even as he would make peace at the first opportunity. He was by nature lazy: and of late years ill health, constant attacks of gout, made him hate action of any kind. Besides, it was a dangerous business—war against almost the whole of Germany. He doubted his strength. Defeat would mean the death of his beloved religion in Germany. Charles was anxious and worried.



But a meeting of the Diet which Charles attended in May 1545 strengthened his determination. Hate of the Catholic rather than love of God was in the hearts and on the tongues of all Lutherans. Lutheran preachers poured out filthy streams of abuse of Rome, the Pope, and the Church. Pamphlets were printed and spread broadcast attacking the Church in the vilest language. Over all Germany this filth poured and trickled as from a burst sewer. Council or no council, the Lutherans clearly were in no mood to yield a hair's breadth. And Charles, who loved the Church deeply, had to restrain himself as best he could. He was not ready yet for war, and if the Lutherans guessed his intentions all would be over.

At the Diet nothing was settled. It closed with the promise of another conference on religion in the near future. But Charles had not been idle. Before the Diet had met Charles had told the Pope that if he was going to fight the Church's battle, the Church must support him with men and money. While the Diet was sitting the Pope, convinced that Charles meant business, at length agreed to pay a handsome subsidy and supply 12,000 foot and 500 light horse.

The Lutherans had noted that 'the signs of the times' presaged war. They were watchful and excited. The Diet had met at Worms, and while he remained there Charles was in a very



dangerous position. He had but 3,000 troops with him. He was in the heart of a hostile Germany, cut off from the Netherlands and from Italy. Regensburg was the natural headquarters for him: there the Papal troops and his own Italian and Spanish troops could reach him easily: there, too, his brother Ferdinand was close at hand. Escorted only by his paltry 3,000 troops he must reach Regensburg without arousing suspicion.

But that was not all. Even if his brother and the Pope sent troops, the Lutherans would outnumber him. He must divide them if he could: and first he must assure himself of Bavaria, one of the few remaining Catholic states. Bavaria hated the Hapsburgs more than she loved the Catholic religion: we have seen her before, intriguing against Charles. Charles, knowing that his position at Regensburg would be almost impossible if Bavaria were hostile, carefully sounded her. Skill and patience at length won a promise of neutrality from her in the event of war. Philip of Hesse and John Frederick of Saxony, the first and leading champions of Lutheranism, were next cautiously sounded. But they were not to be won over. There remained one other ruler of importance, in north-eastern Germany: there were two branches of the Saxon House—that of John Frederick and that of his cousin Maurice.

Now Maurice had declared himself a Lutheran, but he was moderate and cautious: moreover, he was as wily and cunning as John Frederick was frank and blustering, and he coveted John Frederick's lands. Charles won Maurice over to his side.

By the beginning of 1546 the stage was set. Charles had safely reached Regensburg: the neutrality of Bavaria was assured: he had attracted the powerful Maurice to his side, thus dividing the Lutherans. The Lutherans had armed. All Germany was agog with rumours of war. Everyone realized that at last and quickly war must come.

And still Charles hesitated. He hated war. He shrank from taking the plunge. The long, anxious months of preparation, the responsibility of staking all that he held most dear on force, made him ill, and tired, and loath to make any move. Besides, he could not help wondering if it were worth his while to fight; for the Pope, for whom in part he was fighting, was behaving worse than shabbily. No sooner had the council met than Paul III proposed to move it into Italy, where he could control it better. Charles vetoed that proposal, but he could not prevent the council from becoming worse than a farce. Paul had taken good care that there should be in the council a majority of Italian bishops who were under his control, and the council under his

direction quickly showed that it had no intention even of considering reform. Its object was simply to declare the doctrines of the Church in unmistakable terms—to throw down a challenge to the “heretics”: and the “heretics” must be forced to obedience.

This manner of proceeding was not helpful to Charles: the Pope did not intend it to be helpful. The Pope’s was a grudging and unwilling friendship. Charles, honest Catholic as he was, knew very well that reform was needed: he saw that the Pope had no thought for the good of the Church, but only for himself. Well might Charles ask: Is it worth while?

And yet, on the other side, was that howling, blasphemous mob of Lutherans and their drunken princes. Placed between such enemies as them and such a false friend as the Pope, what was an honest defender of the Faith to do? Charles hesitated in his perplexity to the last moment, and in the end it was the Lutherans who struck the first blow.

On 9th July the forces of the Lutheran towns of Augsburg and Ulm joined, moved southwards, and took Füssen. They had then the alternatives of moving farther south and closing the passes to Charles’s Spanish and Italian troops who had not yet arrived, or of marching direct on Charles at Regensburg. They were nervous and did neither. They retired on Augsburg, then

captured Donauworth, and on 4th August were joined by Philip and John Frederick. They had an army of 50,000 foot and 7,000 horse. And Charles, the Emperor, had at Regensburg but 6,000 men!

But Charles had courage, and he was "fast in his determinacion." The weary months of waiting were over. The call to action had come. He threw off his fatigue and illness. The die had been cast: come what would he was ready. Alive or dead, he swore, he would remain in Germany; they should not hound him out. Only 6,000 troops? Well, what of it? He pooh-poohed the suggestion that it was beneath his dignity to lead so small a force.

With his 6,000 he moved to Landshut. Here the Papal troops joined him, and a little later his own Spanish and Italian troops, increasing his force to 25,000 men. Here, too, he received from Philip, "the Cockerel" as he was called, and from John Frederick, a broken staff addressed to "Charles, self-styled Emperor"; it was their renunciation of allegiance to him as Emperor.

While the Lutherans were wondering what to do, Charles was doing. In spite of his greatly inferior forces, in spite of heavy desertions among his German mercenaries, who hated his Spanish and Italian troops, Charles made a dangerous night march to Ingoldstadt. Though they were aware of his move the Lutherans were



too timid to attack. They waited until he was encamp'd outside the city walls, and then for four days they bombarded him with 110 guns. Charles with his 32 guns could make but a feeble reply, but his example was worth many thousand additional men. He exposed himself recklessly in the hastily dug entrenchments. He joked with his men, telling them that the bark of the guns was worse than their bite. His generals and ministers implored him to be more sensible: he only answered, "No King or Emperor has yet been killed by a cannon ball."

But the attack that they expected would follow the bombardment never came. Instead the Lutherans actually retreated westwards. Philip the Cockerel crowed better than he fought.

Since the Lutherans were retreating, Charles attacked. He pushed forward up the Danube towards Ulm. But the Lutherans would not give battle. Winter was now far advanced: supplies were falling short: the German mercenaries continued to desert: the Spaniards and Italians suffered badly from the cold rains: and Charles himself was ill. But Charles would not go into winter quarters. He reckoned he could last out as long as the Lutherans, and he hoped that divisions amongst the enemy might give him his chance.

Charles stuck to it. And he was right. At this moment Maurice of Saxony, who had hitherto



sat still doing nothing, came forward and offered to conquer his cousin's territory. John Frederick had forfeited his lands by taking arms against the Emperor; Maurice claimed the lands as his reward for conquering them. Charles agreed. Maurice, who was aided by Ferdinand, quickly overran his cousin's territory, and John Frederick took his troops off to protect their homes. This was the signal for the break-up of the Lutheran army. Philip withdrew to his territories. Charles found no serious opposition left in south Germany. By February 1547 he had dealt with the small princes and towns. He treated them leniently, levying small fines, and leaving here and there small companies of Spanish troops as a guarantee.

Thus without a serious battle the south German campaign was over.

But the war was not yet over. Honest John Frederick had turned the tables on his treacherous cousin, Maurice. He had reconquered his lands, and was overrunning Maurice's in turn. Ferdinand could not help Maurice, for the Lutherans of the Austrian territories had revolted, and it was all he could do to maintain himself.

It was a dark hour for Charles. The new turn of events in Saxony was not his only trouble. It was just at this unhappy stage that Paul III withdrew the Papal troops. 'Good riddance,'

exclaimed, Charles—or words to that effect. He knew why Paul had withdrawn the troops. Francis had now made peace with England, and Paul and Francis were again as thick as thieves.

Paul was frightened at Charles's quick success in South Germany, and Francis was continually whispering that Charles was out for universal dominion. So this pretty pair put their heads together and did all they could to injure Charles. They were stirring up trouble in Italy. In Naples, Milan, Siena they set conspiracies in train, which were so serious that a year elapsed before Charles's rulers were able to reassert their power.

In March Paul withdrew the council to Bologna in Italy. "Let him take it to Rome," exclaimed Charles to the Papal minister in bitter anger. "Yes, yes, I will protect the council within the very walls of Rome: you shall see that I shall protect it in Rome." The Pope, all Rome, openly rejoiced at the success of John Frederick in Saxony. When the Father of the Church openly rejoiced at the success of heretics, what was the Champion of the Church to do? Charles had no doubt—stick to it. He stuck to it.

At the success of John Frederick, and encouraged by Philip, all North Germany had broken into revolt. Ferdinand wrote imploring Charles to come north. His presence, he said would alone be worth 25,000 foot. Charles went.

Charles was at this time suffering agonies from gout. Tired and ill, anxious and goaded almost to madness by the behaviour of the Pope, he may have found action a relief. He certainly lost no time, once he had decided to move. Passing through Regensburg he joined Ferdinand and Maurice at Eger. On 13th April he crossed the Saxon frontier with 18,000 foot and 8,000 horse. After ten days forced marching he came into touch with John Frederick at Mussen. John Frederick, after burning Mussen Bridge, retreated down the Elbe to Muhlberg. His forces were scattered up and down the country. His idea was to concentrate them under the walls of Wittenberg. On the right bank of the Elbe at Muhlberg he had a bridge of boats by which he would be able to keep up communication with the country on the left bank.

But Charles was on him like a wolf. Marching through the night he reached the Elbe just opposite Muhlberg at 9 o'clock on a misty morning. As the mist cleared the bridge of boats was seen swinging to the stream against the opposite bank of the river. Quick as lightning a dozen Spaniards plunged into the river, gripping their swords in their teeth. They routed the guard which was mounted over the boats. They brought the boats across. Meanwhile the cavalry had found a ford and were crossing. Charles and Ferdinand went with them, the water up to the girths. Charles

was pale as death, and very thin; but his jaw was set, and there was the light of determination in his eye.

John Frederick occupied a strong position on high ground on the other side of the river. Here he felt quite safe. When word of the surprise was brought to him he was calmly eating his breakfast. He made no attempt to hold his position, but withdrew at once, covering the retreat in person with his cavalry. Charles's infantry had quickly crossed the Elbe by the bridge of boats, and throughout the day a running rear-guard action was fought. At sunset Charles delivered his decisive attack. The retreat of the enemy became a panic-stricken flight. John Frederick himself was captured: in a wood he was captured, almost alone, slashing at the enemy, putting all his weight into the mighty strokes of his sword. They brought him on his horse to Charles. His head was streaming with blood. He tried to dismount but could not.

"Most powerful and gracious Emperor," he said, "I am your prisoner."

"You recognize me as Emperor now?" replied Charles.

"I am to-day a poor prisoner: may it please Your Majesty to treat me as a born prince."

"I will treat you as you deserve," Charles answered angrily.

Charles's anger with his wounded prisoner



was not quite what we would expect of him; but it must be remembered he was in great pain from gout, and he had been in the saddle for nearly twenty-four hours. When he got to his camp he cried, "Get my supper ready, for I have been hunting all day long and have caught the pig, and very fat he is."

But after supper and a rest Charles was in better humour. John Frederick was treated courteously, provided with two pages, a valet, a doctor, and a barber. The betting amongst the soldiers was ten to one that he would lose his head. But Charles spared his life. A treaty was signed by which his lands were bestowed upon Maurice, and he promised to accompany the Emperor or his son for ever, wherever they went. The terms were harsh, but it must be remembered that John Frederick had been the author, with Philip, of all the troubles that Charles had met in Germany for more than twenty years. Indeed, he was lucky not to lose his life. Every soldier in Charles's army rejoiced that he was spared, for they admired in him a gallant, courageous, frank soldier. He became a popular figure in Charles's camps, and everyone treated him with consideration. He was always cheerful; only when a Catholic priest came near "he snorted like a buffalo." His cousin Maurice, traitor to the Lutheran cause, betrayer of his cousin, was hated by everyone: and it was



whispered that he would not find a man to fight for him if ever John Frederick regained his freedom.

The victory of Muhlberg was decisive. It was only a matter of time before Philip of Hesse surrendered. Negotiations were in progress. Charles insisted on unconditional surrender, but he promised that Philip should suffer neither personal injury nor perpetual imprisonment. At length Philip yielded. He was brought before Charles. He knelt down to beg for pardon. Charles told him his punishment: his fortresses were to be dismantled, his artillery to be surrendered, an indemnity paid, and himself, like John Frederick, to accompany the Emperor until further notice; but his territories were left intact. On hearing his sentence, Philip, cheeky "cockerel" as ever, laughed in Charles's face; and Charles exclaimed "I'll teach you to laugh." Philip might laugh, but he took his punishment very badly, and nursed a bitter hatred for Charles. John Frederick was a jolly, fat fellow who could make the best of everything; not so Philip: Philip fretted like a wild cat in a cage. Moreover, no one in Charles's camp liked him, with the result that his life was not made as pleasant as John Frederick's.

With the surrender of Philip and John Frederick the war was over. The sight of their two leaders passing by in Charles's train, guarded by

Spanish soldiers, was a lesson to the Lutherans that they were not likely to forget. Luther himself had died the previous year, and as a fitting climax to Charles's victory Luther's native town of Wittenberg surrendered without a blow. Here, where Luther had first started preaching, here in the great church, was the grave of the Protestant leader. A Catholic bishop urged upon Charles that the grave should be desecrated and the bones scattered to the winds. But Charles replied: "I war not with the dead but with the living."

The war was over. Once again Charles had proved his courage and determination. Racked by gout, weary and ill as he was, he had shirked nothing. He was always about cheering his men, "steady as a rock and smiling" under heavy fire, dragging his aching limbs from post to post while the cold storms of November lashed the ground and sapped the health and determination of his generals and ministers. His courage and determination had won him victory; now, as after Pavia, and as after the sack of Rome, the world watched expectantly, and asked, 'What will he do with it?'

## CHAPTER XV

### GERMANY. STORM CLOUDS GATHER

1547-1552

THE Diet met at Augsburg on 13th September 1547. Would Charles use his victory to drive Germany back to the Catholic faith? Victories Charles or his generals had won before—though not in Germany. Pavia he had won, and had taken Francis captive; but a year later Francis had slipped through his fingers, and Italy was all but lost. Rome had been sacked, and Pope Clement VII had groaned within the fortress of St. Angelo; and a year later the Emperor, who had been expected to restore the lost power and glory of the mediaeval empire, was unable to reinforce the last two cities that he held in Italy.

But now surely he would restore Catholicism? The Lutherans were beaten, and he had made their leaders his captives: what more did he want?

Charles wanted much more, for if he had not genius, he had common sense. He desired to see the Lutherans crushed and impotent: but, although they had been outmanœuvred, and were for the moment leaderless, their forces were still considerable; Muhlberg, after all, had been

little more than a skirmish, and the Lutheran forces had not been seriously touched. Charles desired a Pope of pure and honest purpose, ready to co-operate with him for the good of the Church: whereas he had a Pope, who had withdrawn the council to Italy and made a farce of it, who had rejoiced at heretic successes, who refused to consider reform. Charles knew that the attempt to force Germany to become Catholic would only convert her, in spite of Muhlberg, into an armed camp; and he had no mind to risk his treasure and his strength in further warfare. 'All is not gold that glitters'; Charles was no alchemist to turn the glittering victory of Muhlberg into sterling coin. By peaceful methods he would and must try once again to settle the religious problem.

With this determination Charles confronted the Diet. He told them—what they knew well enough—that religion had been the cause of all the disturbances: there could be no real peace until the religious question was settled. Catholics and Lutherans alike clamoured for a settlement: it was the Diet's business to devise a settlement.

But though Lutherans and Catholics clamoured for peace, they would do nothing to obtain it. Charles asked the Diet as a first step to petition the Pope to recall the council to Trent. The Diet would not; Charles himself must ask. Charles agreed to ask, and the Diet, Catholics



and Lutherans, then promised to submit to the decision of a free and general council held in Germany. That at any rate was a point gained. Charles wrote forthwith to the Pope: Only let the council return to Trent, and there is a chance of settlement, for the Catholics will abide by its decisions, and the Lutherans, depressed by their defeat, have promised to submit. Charles got snubbed for his pains. Paul III wanted nothing less than to make things easy for him, or to run the risk of a general council, under German influence, which should reform the Church—and reform away much of the Papal power and revenues.

This was only what Charles had expected. The Pope's refusal made the next step clear. Germany must settle the question herself: it must be a national settlement, since the Pope himself had made a conciliar settlement for the time being impossible. So Charles asked the Diet to appoint a committee to draw up a national settlement. The Diet refused. Rebuffed by Pope, rebuffed by Diet, Charles had to act himself. He appointed a committee of important Catholic and Lutheran statesmen. But neither side would give way an inch; the committee was hopeless. Presently Charles dissolved it.

One cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear, and Charles realized at last that a settlement could never be made out of the deliberations of



the Diet. Since Germany would do nothing to help herself he must present her with a settlement of his own. He appointed three men to draft him a scheme—two moderate Catholic bishops and a Lutheran preacher. And the scheme which these men produced for him was called the Interim—that is, the scheme that was to be obeyed until the day, if it ever came, when a general council, sitting in Germany, should make a final settlement.

The Interim, Charles hoped, would settle the doctrines of the Church for Germany in such a way that it would enable all Germans to remain members of the Catholic Church, and yet allow Lutherans to have their way in many points. The Pope, for instance, must be recognized by all as head of the Church—that was essential if Germany was to be kept within the Church's fold: and only Pope and bishops, it was laid down, could interpret the Bible, and decide what doctrines were right, what wrong; but, on the other hand, the Lutheran demand that the clergy should be allowed to marry was conceded. The Interim was a long document of many clauses dealing with all disputed points of doctrine. It was worded very skilfully, very vaguely. So vaguely indeed that no one knew what it meant, or rather each side thought it contained what it wanted. It was as if the Lutherans were crying for a vegetable, the Catholics for fruit, and

Charles gave them some stewed rhubarb. 'This is a vegetable,' murmurs the one and accepts it; 'this is fruit,' murmurs the other, and accepts it. Both were satisfied for the moment. The Diet passed the Interim on 30th June 1548.

The Interim was Charles's scheme for the settlement of doctrine. He also had a scheme of Reform for the organization of the Church, which he published immediately the Interim had been accepted; his rules aimed at making the clergy a really pure and hardworking body of men: bishops and other high officials of the Church, for instance, were to hold but one benefice at a time, regular preaching was to be enforced as a duty of the priest, bishops were to live in their dioceses and regularly visit the churches in their charge.

Interim and Reform—such were Charles's cures for Germany's religious trouble. But religion was not his only concern. He hoped that now at last, after Muhlberg, he might be able to weld Germany into a united and powerful nation, like France, or England, or Spain. With a united Germany behind him, he would be an Emperor indeed; he would be able to snap his fingers in France's face, and devote himself to his true task of leading the Cross against the Crescent. He accordingly laid before the Diet a pet scheme of his—a proposal for a League of all Germany. Princes and towns, Catholics and

Lutherans should join together, united by the bond of their common German blood, in an all-German League; the League should elect two permanent councils, one to maintain peace and justice throughout the land, the other to be a ministry of war. The Emperor should appoint the captain of each council, and the League should provide a national standing army.

Such was the cure that Charles prescribed for Germany's ills. For the first time he, the Emperor, sat upon his throne and gave laws to his subjects—laws political and religious. Was he then really ruler of Germany, Emperor by the grace of God, ordering the lives of his people? He hoped so: he thought so: but he was deluded. The princes' greed, the Lutherans' hatred, the Catholics' jealousy were subdued for a moment by the memory of Muhlberg: but only for a moment. Charles was no mighty godlike figure of an Emperor, but rather a doctor, perhaps not very skilled, trying to cure a refractory patient. He produced his schemes not as a conqueror intent on having his way, but in despair almost, when every other means of settlement had been tried and had failed. And his schemes were failures.

The German League was a failure; the Diet would not accept it, because Catholics refused to join with Lutherans, and Lutherans with Catholics, and both feared the League would

make Charles too powerful. Charles quietly, resignedly, dropped the scheme.

The Interim and the Reform were failures. The Diet accepted them, it is true, but the Catholics would not enforce them in their territories, saying that the schemes were only intended for Lutheran territories, and the Lutherans, once they saw that they were not to be applied to all Germany, refused to abide by them. 'It is the first step towards driving us back to the Catholic Church,' they said, 'We won't have it.' Interim and Reform were so much waste paper: Catholics sniffed at them, Lutherans laughed at them.

As month followed month, each revealing more clearly the failure of his efforts, Charles grew weary of the great design. Worry and anxiety made him ill; he scarcely seemed to care what happened. At last the Diet met again at Augsburg in 1550, and to it he reported the failure of his schemes.

Charles could not help not being a genius or a conjuror able to produce a scheme, that would at once satisfy everybody. He had tried his utmost, and he had tried alone. And for his honest efforts his only reward was unpopularity. He was at this time more unpopular in Germany than he had ever been. In 1548 a cardinal wrote: "The Germans hate Charles V but fear him more—they will not stir unless he has trouble elsewhere." By 1550 their hate had increased: they hated



him chiefly because of the few hundred Spanish troops that he kept in Germany. These Spaniards were indeed proud and scornful and treated the Germans like dirt, but they were not many, nor can we blame Charles for keeping them beside him. On their loyalty alone could he depend. "I do my best," he wrote to his sister Mary in January 1551, "to make a brave show of upholding my reputation, and not to let people understand that they can force me by fear to do what I do not wish. I find myself at such a pass that if the Germans should choose to attack me I should not know what else to do but to throw the handle after the hatchet, and even so God only grant that I may have the strength to do it."

The Lutherans had already decided to attack him, though they were not yet ready. And the leader, the designer of the attack, was the treacherous Maurice of Saxony. When the Diet of 1548 had met, one Lutheran city, Magdeburg, had still remained unconquered by Charles. It was the last of the Lutheran cities to hold out, and at Maurice's request Charles had given him the task of effecting its surrender. This was just the opportunity Maurice had wanted. For Maurice had been feeling uncomfortable. He realized the unpopularity he had earned by the betrayal of his religion and his cousin. Through his cunning brain many schemes had passed;



finally he decided that he could only make his position and reputation safe in Germany by leading a new Lutheran attack against the Emperor. Charles, in giving him the task of bringing Magdeburg to heel, sealed his own fate. Maurice retired north; he could now gather together his army and prepare his plan of attack without arousing suspicion.

Charles did not suspect Maurice, but he was well aware that trouble was brewing. He was anxious, and well he might be, for, scanning the whole horizon of Europe, he saw storm clouds massing from every direction. In 1547 he had been able for the first time to attack the Lutherans, and he had been victorious. Why? Because for the first time he had his hands completely free to deal with Germany; he had beaten Francis, and left him after the Peace of Cr  py fully occupied in fighting England. The Pope had been forced by the defeat of Francis to resume friendly relations with him: England was occupied with France: and the Turks were quiet. But now everything was changed. France's war with England was over. Both Francis and Henry VIII were dead, and on their thrones sat Henry II and Edward VI. Henry II of France was as hostile to Charles as Francis had ever been, and far cleverer. Everywhere he was plotting against Charles. Edward VI was a Protestant and was persecuting Mary, his

Roman Catholic sister, and Charles's cousin. Thanks to Edward VI, or his advisers, England became friendly with France; indeed, in 1551 a treaty was signed for a marriage between Edward and the French princess Elisabeth. The English ambassadors at Charles's court at Augsburg wrote in 1551: "This court so frowneth at the forwardness of this affiancing that, we do not think they mean to dance at the day of the wedding." This engagement and the persecution of Mary greatly angered Charles: it seemed to him that England was determined to quarrel with him. Henry II meanwhile had stirred up the Turks, as Francis had done before him. They were again marching to the attack up the Danube, and infidel ships were again buzzing like hornets about the western Mediterranean.

In one direction only was there a bright patch on the horizon. Like Henry VIII and Francis, Paul III had died, and the new Pope, Julius III, was very friendly towards Charles. But this bright patch was fast clouding over—thanks to Henry II. A friendly Pope should have meant a peaceful Italy for Charles. But the clever Henry II of France managed to make himself felt. He had forced on a war in Italy. He was supporting a rival candidate for the principality of Parma, one of the Italian states, and supporting him with arms against the arms of Charles and the Pope. Furthermore, friendly as the Pope

was, he was still a Pope, and, like his predecessors, he liked the wealth and enjoyment that his office brought him. Consequently, though under his direction the council had returned to Trent, as Charles wished, it was soon clear that the Pope had no intention of allowing the council to reform the Church. To the council came great churchmen from Spain, Germany, and Italy: Spanish bishops and German theologians alike thundered against the Church's corruption, but the Pope had a safe majority of Italians to carry the day. There would be no reform: only a statement of the Church's doctrine as a challenge to the "heretics": such a council made it impossible for Charles to make a permanent peaceful settlement of Germany's religious problem.

With war already sapping his strength in Italy, with a council refusing to consider reform in spite of his remonstrances, with England quarrelsome, and France dangerous and plotting everywhere, with the Turk active East and West Charles might well be depressed. If and when war came in Germany, blows would rain upon him directed from far beyond Germany's boundaries. But Charles refused to believe that war in Germany was inevitable, was fast approaching. He was unpopular he knew: black looks and angry mutterings were everywhere: at moments he even had his suspicions of Maurice, but then he argued, thinking of John Frederick his

prisoner, "I have a big dog in leash for him, and he would not dare to provoke me."

Yet things were worse than Charles suspected. Maurice had made a secret league, and into the league he had enticed Henry II, with the promise of the rich bishoprics and cities of Metz, Toul, and Verdun. Maurice's chief German confederate was the young Hohenzollern prince, Albert Alcibiades, of Culmbach, a young, fair-headed, freckled giant, as reckless and bloodthirsty a warrior as Germany ever produced.

Thus, while Charles was doing his utmost for the Lutherans at the Council of Trent, the Lutherans were plotting and making ready for war with him. While the Lutherans complained loudly and bitterly of his few thousand foreign Spanish troops, their leader had secretly sold Germany's western frontiers to the French.

Charles's position was dangerous indeed. He was almost alone and unprotected in the heart of a hostile Germany, of a hostile Europe. He could not stay where he was at Augsburg: there he would be caught like a rat in a trap—if the worst came to the worst, which he still refused to believe. He wrote to his sister Mary saying that he thought of coming to the Netherlands: Mary had no doubt of the worst coming to the worst, and implored him not to come and bring the war down upon the Netherlands. He wrote to Ferdinand: for the same reason Ferdin-



and begged him not to come. Alone, isolated, friendless, he at length decided to go to Innsbruck. There he would be near the passes into Italy, and he would be near the council, and might be able to bring more pressure to bear upon it. He reached Innsbruck safely in November 1551. There he waited, refusing to speak to ambassadors, refusing to lift a finger to obtain friends, refusing to believe in Maurice's treachery, refusing to believe that war was inevitable. With a few hundred loyal Spaniards he waited: utterly miserable.



CHAPTER XVI  
GERMANY. THE FLIGHT FROM  
INNSBRUCK

1552-1553

THE storm broke in March 1552. The French King invaded Lorraine and occupied Toul and Metz. Maurice moved to Rothenburg, where he was within striking distance of Charles. And between them the terrible Albert Alcibiades spread death and destruction amongst the weak bishoprics of Franconia, and smoking ruins marked his tracks.

Only a few troops guarded the mountain passes between Charles and Maurice. And Charles spent his time reading and praying and at church, finding therein perhaps the only refuge from his misery. But at last he awoke to the danger of his position. If he stayed, practically defenceless, at Innsbruck Maurice would catch him in a day or two. He must go—and quick. But where? To Ferdinand? No: that would bring the storm upon his brother's head. To Italy? No, his fleeing presence could only do harm there, stirring up his enemies. He would go to the Netherlands. Having made up his mind, he wrote a letter to be given to Ferdinand later:

"The road to the Netherlands is closed for an army, or even for my household. Whatever I do, if it turn out well, people will ascribe it to good luck; if ill, to my own fault. As I must either submit to a great disgrace [capture] or place myself in great danger, I have decided to choose the latter, since it is in God's hands to find the remedy. Thus I have resolved to start to-night for the Netherlands, for I have more means of resistance there than elsewhere, and I should be so near Germany that, if any feel indignation at all this villainy, I could concert action."

At dead of night with six attendants Charles stole out of Innsbruck. His plan was to make first for Constance by by-roads. By dawn they had covered nine miles; Charles felt quite fresh: the excitement and exercise had done him good: his spirits rose at the call of adventure. They marched on until eight o'clock; then they rested at a poor farmhouse. At 2 p.m. they set out again, refreshed: but quickly they learned that Maurice's army was moving forward from Rothenburg, was indeed approaching Fussen. Maurice evidently intended to strike quickly at Innsbruck and capture the Emperor. Scouts and advance parties of his army were on every side. Charles could not possibly get through. He realized that the game was up: he was cornered. He hastened back. He reached his room at Innsbruck that night, and so secret had

been his flight that no one was aware that he had been away.

Ferdinand was at Innsbruck; and there the brothers waited. They waited—and Maurice's army rapidly drew nearer. Ferdinand had nothing to fear from Maurice. The Emperor was the treacherous prince's quarry. But Ferdinand stuck to his brother in his desperate situation, for the honour and prosperity of the House of Hapsburg were at stake: and if the head of the house fell the other members would inevitably suffer ere long. Ferdinand at length persuaded Charles to fly to his Austrian territories: the only alternative was to await Maurice's arrival and then surrender—and that was unthinkable.

On the evening of 19th May Charles escaped with Ferdinand. On the next day Maurice's army reached Innsbruck. The bird had flown: they had to content themselves with looting his property.

Charles's last act was to give John Frederick his freedom; but he begged him as a favour to accompany him for another fortnight; he thought "the big dog" might be useful in negotiations with Maurice. Emperor and prisoner had become the best of friends; John Frederick cheerfully consented.

Through storm and wind and gale the little party, with Charles, Ferdinand, and John Frederick at their head, struggled through the Bren-

ner pass, The night was black as pitch. Two of the baggage mules were lost. The torches were extinguished by the winds. And the winds seemed to shriek in fierce merriment at the plight of Charles, lord of Spain and the Netherlands, of Naples, master of Italy, ruler of vast dominions across the seas, first Prince of Christendom,

.. Holy Roman Emperor. Behold him after thirty years and more of honest patient striving fleeing from—Maurice! Yes, but from more than Maurice! From the selfish greed of Germany's princes, which was to delay the creation of the united Germany for which he had striven, until the nineteenth century: and from the new ideas, the great tide of Protestantism which in sweeping across Europe was washing away the landmarks of the old Christendom and helping to shape modern Europe. Charles was the last great Emperor of Christendom, and the shrieking winds that pursued him through the Brenner pass might well be mocking the failure of his ignorant efforts, honest and sincere though they were, on the one hand to anticipate, on the other to check the inevitable changes of time.

But Charles was not beaten yet. He was still "fast in his determinations and of good stomach and couraggy." If he had begun to realize, as is probable, that he could never compass German unity nor bring back Germany to the Church's fold, that did not mean that he would bow the



knee to Maurice. The little party, worn out, at length reached Bruneck. From Bruneck Charles and John Frederick hurried on to Villach. They were safe at last.

Ferdinand had left his brother to go to Passau, where Maurice and all the other princes of Germany had assembled to consider the position. It must be remembered that the majority of the princes had taken no part in the war. Maurice had had as allies only the terrible Albert Alcibiades, and one or two other minor rulers, and the French King. And Maurice quickly found not smiles but cold looks were the result of his campaign. The other princes feared his armed strength: they deplored his invitation to the French King: and they shuddered at the ghastly havoc that the hell-hound Albert Alcibiades was spreading with fire and sword amongst the defenceless bishoprics: 'Even if Charles was a tyrant,' they argued, 'he was a humane tyrant.'

So Maurice found himself unpopular. And he had to be moderate in his demands. He demanded the release of Philip of Hesse; a settlement of the religious question by a national congress at which Lutheran and Catholic should be equally represented; immediate peace and toleration until the congress; Charles was to have no more foreign troops or ministers in Germany; and John Frederick was not to have full freedom. These demands were embodied in



a treaty and sent to Charles at Villach for his signature.

But Charles, as we have said, was not beaten yet. He would not be dictated to by Maurice. He went through the treaty clause by clause, criticizing and pointing out the injustice of the demands. When Ferdinand learned how his brother was receiving the treaty he came to him, and almost in tears begged him to accept it wholesale, lest he and all his house should be utterly broken. But Charles remained firm in his determination: he was clever enough to see that Maurice's position was not as strong as it appeared. The other princes feared and disliked him. Henry II of France was already withdrawing his troops in disgust at the opening of negotiations. Albert Alcibiades continued his devilish career, spreading terror everywhere. So Charles made mincemeat of the treaty: he pointed out, amongst other things, that it was not his duty but the duty of the Diet according to the German Constitution, to summon or not to summon a national congress: he could not dream of usurping such power; and as for the foreign troops, he begged leave to remind Maurice that not long ago he had been glad enough to make use of them, that indeed he owed the conquest of his cousin's territories to them.

To Ferdinand he said: "If the Imperial

authority must be lost, I should not like the loss to be in my reign." He returned the treaty to Maurice amended in almost every clause.

And Maurice accepted the amended treaty.

Thus Charles was very far from beaten. Philip of Hesse was released, but he was now old, broken, and harmless. John Frederick agreed to be content with his freedom, and not to attempt to regain his territories: he remained Charles's friend. Apart from the release of these two captives, Charles had agreed to nothing which he had not granted previously of his own free will. The settlement of the religious question was postponed to the next Diet—and when that met the Emperor took no part in it, as we shall see. Great concessions had to be made on the subject of religion. But Charles washed his hands of them. He left them to be arranged by his brother.

Charles's skilful diplomacy had given his defeat almost the appearance of victory. He was not content with this. The trials of the last years had left their mark on him; he was very thin and pale, his eyes were sunken in his fleshless face, his beard had turned white as snow. But the adventures of the last weeks had stirred his blood. Fifty-two years old though he was, he felt full of energy. And now vigorously he prepared for war. He was determined to teach Henry II, who had taken Metz, Toul, and

Verdun, that he could not thus lightly raid Germany. He sent urgent demands home to Philip for men and money. He swore that he would drain Naples, Sicily, and the Netherlands dry in order to have his revenge on Henry. As regiment after regiment of foot and horse gathered round him his spirits increased, and his health improved. His spirit was the spirit of a young man, of a vigorous soldier, fired with resolve.

At length he was on the march, westwards. He passed through Augsburg, Ulm, Strassburg. From Strassburg he turned northwards to Landau. But he was trying his strength too severely. His spirit was strong and eager, but not his body. At Landau a violent attack of gout stretched him on his bed for seventeen days. They were vital days, for winter was advancing, and the enemy preparing to receive him. It was October when he was well enough to move again. In spite of the lateness of the season he decided to lay siege to Metz—and Metz had by then had ample time to make ready for the siege.

With an army of 75,000 men Charles encompassed the city—to no purpose. Persistent as ever, exposing himself rashly to the enemy's fire, Charles hung on, while winter, disease, and desertion depleted his army. At last, on New Year's Day, he had to admit failure. The siege

was raised. Charles withdrew with an army whose numbers had dropped to 40,000. Never in all his campaigns had he suffered such a defeat.

Charles retired to the Netherlands. He had not spared himself, and he had to pay the penalty. Gout attacked him again. He would see no one save his sister Mary. The English ambassador wrote: "He is so weak and pale as to seem a very unlike man to continue." People indeed began to believe he was dead, for he was never seen; and it is said that to prove he was still alive he was carried on an ambulance through Brussels for all to see.

## CHAPTER XVII

### "I HAVE DONE WHAT I COULD"

THE stricken white-haired monarch was very weary. He remained in the Netherlands throughout the years 1553-1554, and with each month that passed he thirsted more for rest and retirement. For him there was no pleasure in kingship; his crowns and kingdoms had meant for him throughout his life unremitting work and anxiety. Only devotion to duty and to the Church had pricked him to unceasing effort. But now illness robbed him of the energy that of old had answered the call of duty. In Spain Philip, his son, whom he had left as Regent, was old enough to rule without his aid: why should not Ferdinand, his brother, act for him in Germany? As the time drew near for the Diet to meet again, Charles shrank from the task of grappling once more with the religious problem. He was conscious of failure. For over twenty years he had striven with Lutheran and Pope for the Church he loved: patience, honesty of purpose, fairness had achieved nothing. Charles felt his strength and courage unequal to the labour of the conflict; and finally he asked Ferdinand to represent him.

It was under Ferdinand's guidance that the



Peace of Augsburg at length ended the years of strife and ushered in a period of peace for Germany. Ferdinand was better fitted to understand Germany's need, for he had lived in Germany for twenty years, and his whole thoughts were concentrated on Germany. He recognized the hopelessness of ever uniting the two religious parties. So it was that he established peace in Germany, but a peace that recognized and legalized the two religions. Charles had recognized the two religions as a temporary expedient, but he would never have consented to a permanent recognition; for him permanent peace must be based on unity and on unity only: all Germany must remain within the fold of the Church. Ferdinand based the Peace of Augsburg on a permanent agreement to differ.

Charles sighed when he heard the terms of the Peace: he may have seen that such a settlement was inevitable, but 'I could never have done it,' he thought to himself. True: he never could have done it; he would never have admitted that Protestantism was too strong for him: but his whole career proves it was: and it was, because it was a part of the natural growth of Europe. Charles could not have stopped Europe growing, however much he had tried.

The burden of years, of illness, of weariness was heavy upon Charles, and at length he resolved to resign all his crowns and kingdoms. To his

son Philip he finally decided to give the Netherlands. This was a pity. Philip was also to have Spain. To place Spain and the Netherlands under one rule endangered all the work that Mary of Hungary and Charles had accomplished in the Netherlands. And they had accomplished much. They had now added Liège and Cambrai to the provinces in addition to Friesland, Over-  
yssel, Utrecht, and Tournai. The Netherlands were thus geographically far more compact than when Charles first became their ruler. And not only were they more compact; the skill of Charles and of Mary and her advisers had brought all these separate provinces to submit to the central government; and throughout the provinces there was one system of administration, of justice, of finance. This task of establishing strong monarchical government and welding the provinces into a united nation was the task that Charles's grandparents had begun in Spain, the task that the Valois and Tudor kings had achieved in France and England. The formation of powerful nations like France, Spain, England is one of the signs by which we can recognize modern Europe emerging. And in the Netherlands, as in Spain, Charles's work of forming a strong nation out of a collection of provinces was a work that was in the spirit of the times. It was a pity then that just at the time when this work was well on the way to accomplishment, the

Netherlands should have passed to a foreign king, to the King of Spain, Charles's son Philip. The Netherlands were fit now to become a separate kingdom: they became an outlying province of a foreign king, and this unhappy status in later years proved fatal to all the good work that Charles's reign had done.

At four o'clock in the afternoon of 25th October 1555 Charles rode into Brussels. He was mounted on a small mule, for he was too infirm to sit his charger. He entered the great hall of Brussels. The hall was filled to overflowing with the great nobles and the deputies of the provinces, but at the western end was a raised dais whereon were three chairs—for Charles, for Mary, and for Philip. Leaning heavily on his stick Charles reached the dais. He sat down, and all eyes were upon him while one of the Councillors of State read out to the assembly the formal address containing the declaration of his abdication. At the end of the address Charles rose. Deep silence filled the great hall. Then Charles began to speak. He briefly related the history of his forty years of rule. "I have had to bear the burden of many wars, and that, as I can testify, against my will. Never have I undertaken them except under compulsion and with regret. . . . I have not undergone all this without feeling the burden and the tire. It is easy to judge of these by the condition to which I am

reduced." Then he went on: "I have done what I could and am sorry that I could not do better. I have always recognized my insufficiency and incapacity, and in my present state, feeling this to have become yet greater, I have been obliged to adopt this resolution which has been communicated to you. My son has arrived at man's estate. I trust that God will grant him the talents and the strength to fulfil, better than I have done, the obligations imposed upon a king. I leave my son in my place and commend him to you. . . . I can truly testify that I have never done violence, wrong, or injustice wittingly to any of my subjects; if any I have done, it has been . . . in ignorance; I am sorry for it, and I ask pardon for it."

Charles was weeping as he concluded his speech, and an Englishman who was there says "not one man in the whole assemblie, that during the tyme of a good piece of his oracion poured not abundantly teares, some more, some less."

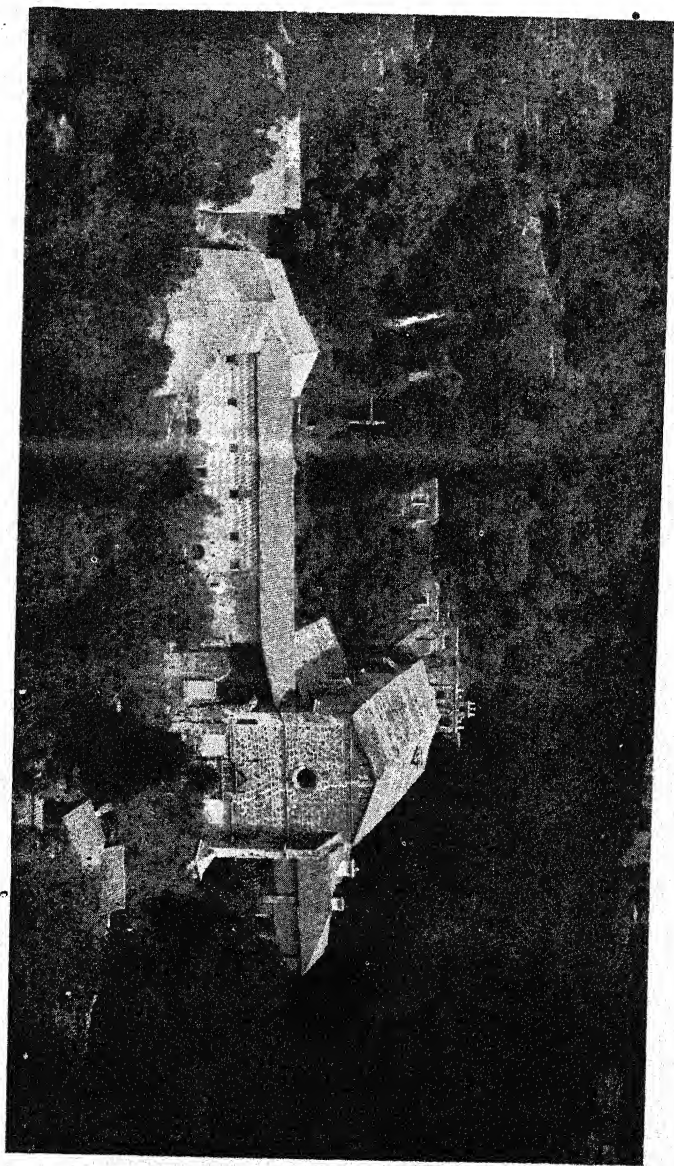
Then Philip knelt before his father. Charles clasped him in his arms and said: "My son, I give, yield, and make over to you my countries here, even as I possess them." He turned to the assembled nobles and deputies, and to them his last words were: "Gentlemen, you must not be astonished if, old and feeble as I am in all my members, and also from the love I bear you, I shed some tears."

So Charles resigned the Netherlands to Philip. He was still Emperor and King of Spain—though only nominally. On 16th January 1556, to a deputation from Spain, he resigned his Spanish kingdoms also and Sicily. His long-cherished plan was to retire to a convent in Spain and spend his last days in peace. But for months he had to wait in the Netherlands for he had not enough money for the voyage.

On 17th September he set out from Flushing on his last voyage. His ship was called the Bertandona. An English fleet, to do him honour, escorted him down the Channel to the coast of Brittany. Charles landed at the port of Laredo. From there he set out for the convent of Yuste in Estremadura. As he passed through Burgos and Valladolid crowds, nobles and citizens, flocked to take their last glimpse of him; he was no longer their King, but perhaps they realized then better than ever before how wise a ruler he had been, how unsparing of his strength—that was now so utterly used up.

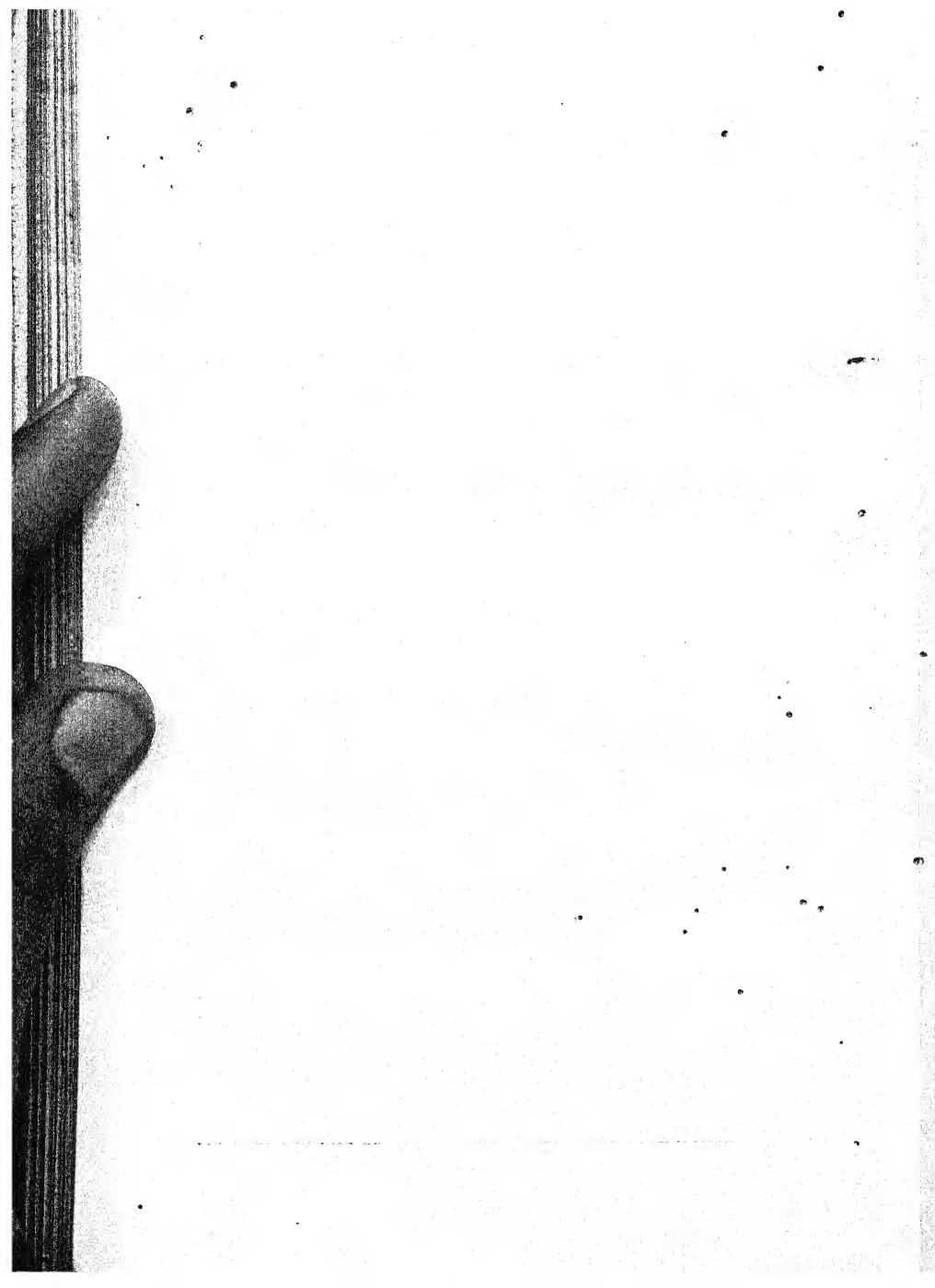
Charles lived for two years amidst the peace of woods and hills at Yuste. His abdication and retirement made a great sensation in Europe. A very few laughed: the rest of men applauded him. Generally men cling to glory and honours until their last breath has passed: Charles, with his keen sense of duty, resigned his powers when he thought he was no longer capable of doing





THE MONASTERY OF YUSTE

[Photo, W. F. Munsell



justice to his subjects. It was a noble end to a great career: after the storms of active rule a sweet peace that he enjoyed to the full. "The name of Charles is enough for me," he exclaimed with delight, "for henceforth I am nothing."

Charles enjoyed himself at Yuste. He ate well—too well. He devoted much time to religious duties. He talked with the brethren of the convent, and entertained many visitors. Every day he spent an hour or more with a certain Torriani, who made clocks and mechanical toys, in which he was greatly interested. He did not live in a cell: indeed, it was a little palace of four rooms that he occupied. He never for a moment regretted his retirement from the world.

On 31st August 1558 he was seized with a fever and had to be carried to bed. For three weeks the fever raged. Early on the morning of 30th September the end came. Into his hands was put the crucifix which his wife had held when she died. Charles gazed steadfastly at it, then clasped it to his breast. As his strength swiftly ebbed the fingers could no longer hold it. The Archbishop of Toledo, who stood by the bedside, took the crucifix and held it before Charles's eyes. At last a great cry escaped his lips—"Ay, Jesus!" Charles was dead: the last great Roman emperor was dead.



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